THE SHAKERITE

VOL. 89 ISSUE I DEC. 21, 2018

SHAKER GUN CLUB
VISITORS
Copyplus

ON THE COVER

SHAKER GUN CLUB
VISITORS
CopyPlus

Gun Club, 1972, Page 42

Beneath the boxes and discarded trophies stashed away in the basement of the high school lie the remnants of another time.

GUEST ’RITER

Megan Lin

Fighting Misconceptions in the War Against Affirmative Action, Page 66
Guest ’Riter Megan Lin moved from Texas to Shaker this year, leaving a position at her former high school’s newspaper. Her writing experience shows in this piece examining the Harvard admissions trial and the elements of affirmative action.

THE EDITORIAL BOARD

The Editorial Board governs Shakerite opinion coverage, writes ’Rite Idea editorials and serves as a guiding force for The Shakerite on policy and practice. The Board includes (left to right, back to front): Ainsley Snyder, Emet Celeste-Cohen, Astrid Braun, Mae Nagusky, Emilie Evans, Lauren Sheperd and Ashley Sah. Read the ‘Rite Idea on page 38.

A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

This issue is reaching readers later than planned. Nothing, I'm sure, has gone according to plan for anyone this fall.

When troubling events occur, journalists are among the first to process them — but we can also be the last. Through fires, public meetings, administrative leaves, resignations and even death, we have reported on shakerite.com in our best attempt to document and verify everything so the community is not left reeling in the tumult.

Though we are still left with questions, we have begun to step back and survey the Shaker that we've seen so rattled in the past few months. It looks tired and shaken.

To us, at times, this Shaker is unrecognizable. It's when we look more closely that we realize that this adversity can be endured, if we choose to endure.

We realize this because more than 900 people showed up for Shaker Nov. 8 for the community meeting, and about as many stood in the cold to honor Woodbury teacher Aisha Fraser Nov. 19. In the past three months, more people have showed up to school board meetings than all the attendees last year combined.

Through all the contention, one similarity prevails: We show up to say that we want to make Shaker a better place.

It frustrating that our visions don't always align, but comforting that our motives often do. So, in The Shakerite's attempt to improve the district it serves, we will continue to give you the news.

Astrid Braun
Editor in Chief

The Shakerite

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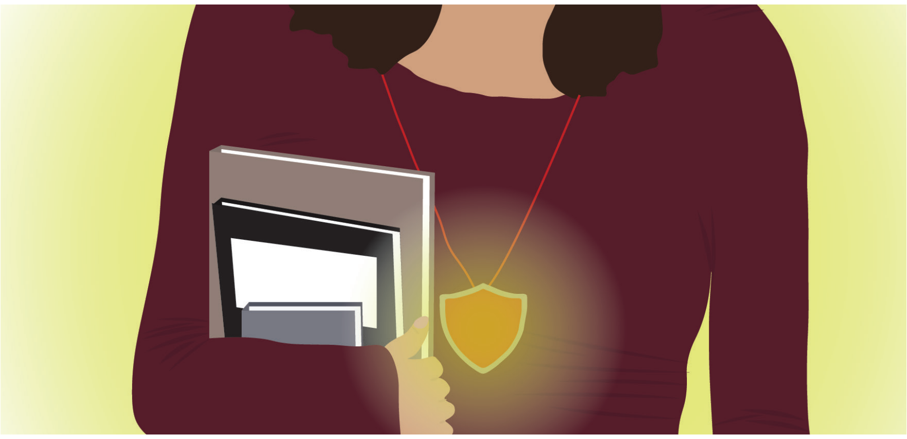

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Up and Down Stairs Are Losing Direction

Riley Putnam, Logan Cohen, Erin Williams, Olivia Peebles and Rachel Coxon,
Journalism I Reporters

The high school's main stairways, designated as one-way in 2002, are gradually becoming two-way once again.

The Shakerite observed the directional stairways Sept. 25 and counted the number of students who traveled down the up stairs located by the upper cafeteria entrance. Between fifth and sixth period, 59 students were seen coming down the up stairs from the third floor, along with one security guard and one teacher.

When administrators designated stairwells as up or down in 2002, they hoped to improve the four-minute transitions from class to class by relieving traffic jams that occurred on the second floor near the stairwells.

Senior Samiyah Melton said that the one-way stairways work well for students overall. She said that the stairways are narrow, so it is easy for them to get "crowded and hectic."

Freshman Margaux Girard said the one-way stairs work so long as everyone uses them correctly.

"They're fine until the people go down the wrong staircases or up the wrong staircase, and then they start pushing you even though they're not in the right place," she said.

Security guard Deanna Bush said students should use the right staircase because when they go the wrong way, "it is like a salmon going upstream; it just doesn't work out."

According to a 2002 Shakerite article about the policy, the stairways were "a nightmare" before the up and down rules were applied. A junior from that time, Melissa Walton, had trouble getting to class. "People couldn't get up or down the steps. People were angry and started to make a scene," she said.

But, some people think that the policy is not necessary. "I think you should be able to go up or down each and the other type of stairways," freshman Ayden King said.

King also said he's seen both students and staff using the wrong staircases. He admitted to using the incorrect staircase, as well. "I'd be late if I didn't," he said.

The increased two-way traffic in the main stairways coincides with the high school's revised tardy policy, instituted in 2015. Under the policy, if students arrive to class after the tardy bell, they must visit one of two tardy-slip stations, located on the first and second floors, and obtain a pass for entry.

Students are then given five minutes to return to class in order to avoid an unexcused absence. Students who accumulate five unexcused tardies must serve an extended-study detention after school.

Paul Kelly, who has worked at the high school for 16 years, said stairway traffic is better than it used to be. However, he said, "You're always going to have chaos when you have 1,600 kids in the building."

Photo by David Vahey

Reese will also make MAC year-round. The Scholars summer program is to begin in 2019.

MAC Scholars' Next Steps

Rachel Barnard, Demi McClain, Juliet Tonkin and Melanie Jones, Journalism I Reporters

Nathaniel H. Reese Jr., a former sixth-grade math and science teacher at Woodbury Elementary School, is now the Minority Achievement Committee Scholars adviser and will lead the program and its expansion to third and fourth graders.

As of Oct. 2, Reese relocated to his new workplace in the high school main office. Desmari Carter replaced Reese as sixth-grade math and science teacher at Woodbury.

With the appointment of Reese, MAC Scholars is expanding. Third and fourth graders at all elementary schools will soon be introduced to the positive ideas of achievement and hard work, according to Mary Lynne McGovern, who was the MAC Scholars adviser for 25 years before retiring.

"By the time they come here, they will know all about what it's about. They wear shirts and ties, they have a handshake, and all of those parts of the program will be introduced to them when they are very young," she said.

Photo by David Vahey

Reese has several goals for the scholars program. His main focus is making academic success appealing to students. Reese said, "From the time that I started working with the scholars here, my mindset has always been, 'Let's make being smart cool.' "

Reese also wants to get to know his new scholar students. "A lot of students have a lot of baggage that they're bringing from home, and sometimes being so busy as teachers, we don't even think about that," he said. "So I think I'll have more time to focus on finding out more about the students, so I can get to know what makes them move and what gets them motivated and so forth. And then I can adjust them there and just express the importance of the future."

Reese's appointment has received support from students and teachers. "He's motivating, he's a leader and he's someone to look up to," said junior Brandon Golston, a MAC Scholar.

Junior Dakota Cochran, another MAC Scholar, said that Reese wants the best for everyone. "He's a positive African-American role model," Cochran said.

McGovern said that Reese is passionate about the scholars program, and will interact well with the students.

"He's got a personality that will help him connect with the scholars here, and with the teachers, counselors and others that he will interact with when he comes over to the high school," she said.

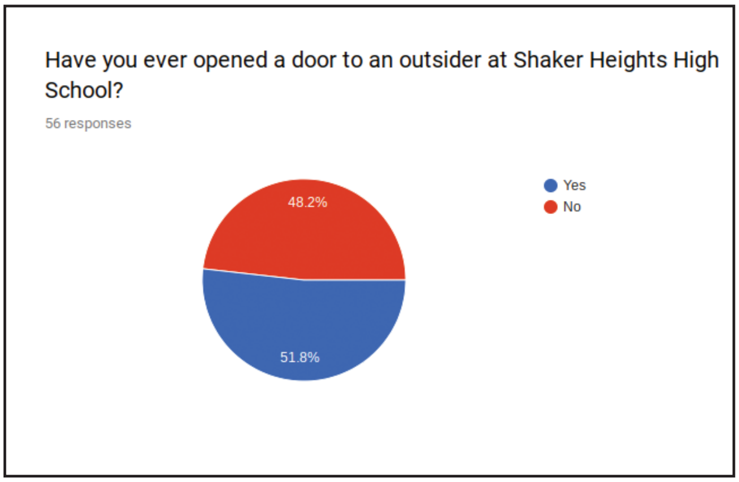
Sophomore scholar Marcus Danner said that he and the other scholars will miss McGovern, but he has hopes for a bright future for scholars.

"It's going to be a great start, so I wish the best for the new director. I hope he leads us well and does good things for us," he said.

In McGovern's words, "This program has to be something that is in your heart, and it is in Mr. Reese's heart."

Opening Doors to Safety Concerns

Aggie Augustine, Viv Bowling, Mia Compton-Engle, Katie Fraser and Allison Shelley,
Journalism I Reporters


Have you ever opened a door to an outsider at Shaker Heights High School?

56 responses

In an act familiar to people who attend and work at the high school, a student opened a door Sept. 18 and admitted someone to the building.

"On Tuesday, we had one of our students open a door and let in an outsider. Obviously, this person did not have a Shaker Student ID, and that is what drew Security's attention to him. When approached by Security, he ran from the building," the administration stated in an email sent to students Sept. 20.

Leonard Jones, 19, was charged with trespassing, according to a Shaker Heights Police Department report on the incident. He had previously pleaded guilty Oct. 24 in Cuyahoga County Common Pleas Court to attempting to carry a concealed weapon, obstructing official business and falsification.

On the morning announcements, administration told students not to open doors for outsiders. "Students may not open the doors during school hours for any individual," the announcement stated. "Once the doors are locked, all visitors or students must enter through the main doors. If a student steps outside during the day to make a phone call, they must re-enter through the main doors.

"Students observed opening doors will be given consequences."

Administration had never stated this before, but began to emphasize it after the Sept. 18 incident. The Sept. 20 email also reiterated the importance of wearing IDs in order to prevent such incidents.

Some students are comfortable opening the door for someone who seems to be a high school student, regardless of whether or not the outsider is wearing an ID.

"Half of us don't wear our ID anyway. I'd probably just [say] 'It's fine,' " junior Marina Denunzio said.

Others said they would refuse to let someone into the building without proper student identification. "I would make them prove that [their ID] was actually theirs. I would crack the door and ask why they're outside," freshman Will Berick said.

While some believe the student who opened the door should be punished, as a precedent for similar occurrences, others think that the student made an honest mistake.

"I do understand, because you're kids and you just think you know them, and nothing will happen," Global Studies teacher Kyle Fleming said.

Principal Jonathan Kuehnle, who was placed on administrative leave Nov. 1, urged students not to let others in the building, regardless of whether they wore IDs. "It's just a common sense rule," he said. "It's a case of better safe than sorry."

Although there is no explicit Shaker policy regarding entrances, the district has previously created visitor policies to combat these intrusions. Kuehnle cited the Columbine High School massacre as a stimulant for tightening entrance rules. "Shaker's kind of, in my experience, late to the game in this," he said.

Another Sort of Dean's List

Ahmad Mujtaba, Matthew Roth, Akaash Chandra and Max Jack, Journalism I Reporters

Tardiness and class-cutting lead the weekly list of top offenses at the high school, according to Dean of Students Greg Zannelli, who began emailing faculty about the most common student rule violations every week.

Zannelli sent the first email April 23. "The purpose of this is to focus on identifying and helping students in the areas where students have difficulty in meeting expectations," he wrote.

The most frequent offense is tardiness, with 1,554 infractions for the 2017-2018 school year.

Following on the list is "disruptive behavior/failure to comply," with 439 infractions, and vulgar language at 123 infractions.

Consequences usually include detentions; In-school support, where faculty sends work to students in a separate room; and Saturday school, where students attend school on a Saturday for three to four hours. There were 1,310 detention assignments, 192 In-School Support assignments and 177 assignments of Saturday School during the 2017-2018 school year.

The ID policy was implemented Jan. 22, 2018, and reintroduced at the beginning of the 2018-19 school year. Zannelli's weekly list does not specify how many students have violated the policy. Kuehnle explained that ID violations are included in the existing offense lists. "You won't see a specific code," he said. "Not wearing your ID could go under 'failure to comply.' "

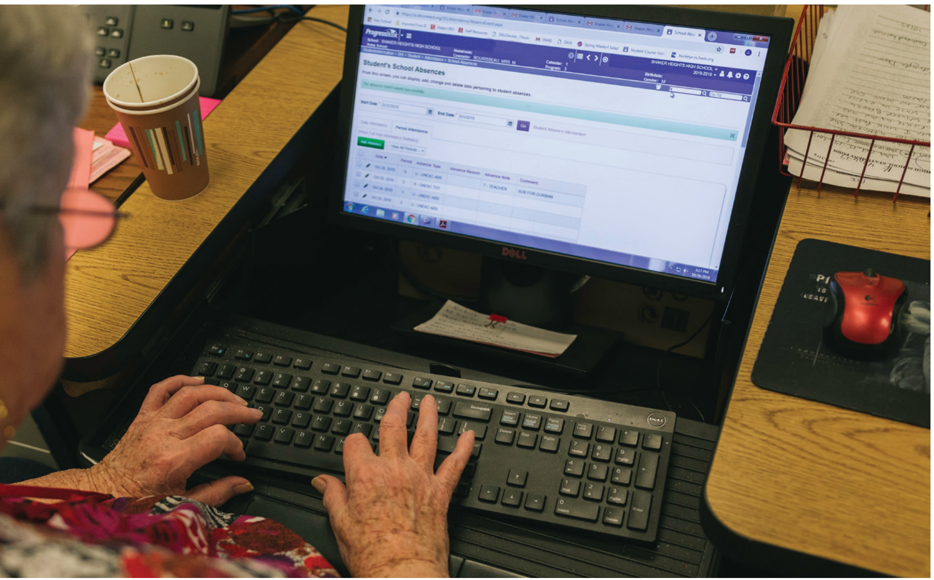


Photo by David Vahey

Sharing the list was a team decision among Principal Jonathan Kuehnle, Zannelli and the assistant principals. The administration wanted to keep the staff informed so faculty would know what the administration is doing about student behavior.

"It helps all of us," said Kuehnle, who was placed on administrative leave Nov. 1. "One big thing that can help the school climate improve, no matter what school you're in, is if all the staff members are on the same page."

"If everybody is consistent about enforcing certain expectations, for example, like the IDs If everybody is on it, it gets enforced better. It's just more information," Kuehnle continued.

Security guard Fred Clemon said that Shaker students are generally well behaved, but there's a small portion who act inappropriately. "It helps if students report incidents," Clemon said. "The security system isn't perfect, and there's a lot of room for improvement."

Spanish teacher Adam Cohen said that although he appreciates the information Zannelli sends, he does not use it to change his teaching practices.

Kuehnle said he does not expect teachers to alter their behavior based on the information, but he thinks that it is important for all staff to be aware of what is happening.

Zannelli agreed. "Sometimes, the teachers and the administrators feel like there's a divide," he said, "because, we knew what it was like to be teachers at one time, but teachers don't know what it's like to be administrators. When we do this, it makes the team just work better, because we're here to support them."

Van Aken District Aims to Enrich Shaker

The newly renovated Van Aken district, dubbed "The New Downtown" of Shaker Heights, has caused frustration, along with eager anticipation, among Shaker residents.

The district, originally set to open summer 2018, is now to open in spring 2019. Some stores and restaurants, however, are open or will open through the fall and winter of 2018.

"With all the construction going on, the roads have been blocked off," said sophomore Amelia Berg, who lives near the Van Aken development. "The only aggravating thing is that they said it was going to be done three or four months, ago and it's not."

Social studies teacher Tod Torrence lives on Farnsleigh Road, near the construction. He echoed Berg's opinion. "It's been terrible. The one-way and the closed-access roads have been a real pain. Getting to work, getting home" is difficult, he said.

Social studies teacher Brian Berger said that the city has talked about redeveloping Van Aken for as long as he can remember. "I'm 42 years old. I've been a part of Shaker for over 40 years," Berger said.

The idea for a revamped Van Aken has been in process since 2000, according to a project timeline published at shakeronline.com. However, the plan was not made final until 2008.

According to Brian Meng, senior associate of Bialosky Cleveland, the architecture firm designing Van Aken, the goal of the development is to create "a liveable public space that would be welcoming to

After construction delays, residents and high-end retailers begin to move in

Danielle Krantz *Campus and City Community Reporter*

Morgan Fowler *Campus and City Faculty Reporter*

STOP
SUBURBAN PEDIATRICS PARKING

David Vahey

all the residents of the city."

The development also offers 103 living spaces, located above the commercial occupants. Promotional material invites tenants to live "upstairs."

Jason Russell, neighborhood general manager of RMS Corporations, the developer of Van Aken, explained why the apartments at Van Aken are being called "The Upstairs."

"We wanted the name of the apartment building to be very much connected with the district itself, and we see the district as an amenity to the apartment buildings, so we wanted the two to work cohesively," Russell said.

But the housing in Van Aken is not cheap.

A Van Aken one-bed, one-bath apartment rents for $1,635 a month — $865 more than an apartment at nearby Fairway-Marchmont Terrace Apartments on Warrensville Center Road. A two-bed, two-bath apartment at Van Aken costs $1,022 more than the Terrace apartments of similar square footage.

A competing apartment complex is in Pinecrest, a new shopping and living development, similar to Van Aken, being built in Orange Village. A one-bed, one-bath apartment there rents for $1,868— $233 more than Van Aken. A two-bed, two-bath residence rents for $101 less than Van Aken.

The median household income in Orange is $102,109 — $24,370 more than Shaker's. But property taxes are $2,370 — $1, 637 per $100,000 lower than Shaker's, as of 2017. Apartment tenants do not pay property tax, but building owners do. So, property tax may be passed on to tenants through rents.

Some retail outlets leasing space at Van Aken are not economical, either. Whiskey Grade is an apparel store. “It’s really nice. It’s more on the pricier side,” Berg said.

On its website, a men’s leather belt sells for $89, and screened T-shirts go for $38.

A Detroit-based watch company, Shinola, will be opening; Shinola watches cost $500-1,500, and a women’s handbag on the company’s site lists for $495.

In addition to the apartments and retail at Van Aken, the development also features a common space called “The Living Room.”

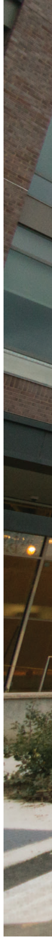
“The Living Room is the half an acre public space which will have two buildings situated around it: the Mitchell’s building to the South and what we’re calling building B1 to the North, which is the two-story restaurant building,” Meng said. There will also be lawns to allow people to gather and a play area for children.

Meng thinks that Van Aken will help Shaker by creating retail tax revenue and new living opportunities. “It creates a public space that will allow people to gather, meet and hang out” and replaces an outdated commercial center that what was there previously, he said.

Some other businesses moving into Van Aken are Luster, Manifest, Xhibition, Urban Orchid, Stump Plants, See Eyewear, Grooveryde, Eddy’s Barbershop, Double Rainbow, Cleveland Clothing Company, Bonobos and Andrews Colour Atelier. Restaurants include On The Rise, Bottlehouse Brewery, Banter, Jonathan Sawyer, Rising Star Coffee Roasters, Restore Cold Pressed, Mitchell’s Ice Cream, Genuine Pizza and Brassica.

The development emphasizes renting to local businesses, rather than chain stores. Community members are excited about these local stores.

Sophomore Zoe Rosenfelt lives near the Van Aken area and is very excited about Mitchell’s Ice Cream. “We love ice cream, and I’d like to have somewhere



Bonobos, a high-end men’s fashion retailer owned by WalMart will deliver customers’ fitted clothes to their homes. **Photo by David Vahey**

ROAD
CLOSED
MITCHELL'S
HOMEMADE

The new Mitchell's Ice Cream shop in the Van Aken District is open, but construction across the district is not finished yet.
Photo by David Vahey

that I can be with my friends without driving," she said.

According to the Jean Presby, shop manager of Mitchell's at Van Aken, even though construction delayed the opening, Mitchell's opened Oct. 18.

"As with all construction, delays occur because of weather and unforeseen issues with new construction. We, of course, would have loved an earlier opening, but we are understanding of these issues and do not intend to rush perfection," Presby stated in an email.

Another goal the city is trying to achieve is to make Van Aken an area that provides retail and restaurant space, according to Shaker Heights Director of Planning Joyce Braverman.

"The city is a residential community, mostly, so we wanted to add more commercial and office space to diversify the tax space," Braverman said.

"Van Aken was really [about] making a pedestrian-oriented neighborhood that stitched together the surrounding area to create a walkable experience that would bring residential, retail and office use and really creating Shaker's city center," Meng said.

Russell called the district a "a place where you interchange, recreate, enjoy life -- and then you retreat upstairs to your private residence."

Berger said the revamped Van Aken development has "been a long time coming."

> **"They said it was going to be done three or four months ago, and it's not."**
>
> Amelia Berg, sophomore

Transgender Students Feel Locked Out

They bear the uneasy burden of choosing among Shaker's limited restroom options

Mae Nagusky *Web Managing Editor*

When you are little, your parents often demand that you use the restroom. When you're a 3-year-old kid, your mom never lets you out of the house until you at least try to use the restroom. Your parents demand that you use the restroom before getting on a flight, going to bed or leaving the house. When you take a road trip, they insist you go at every rest stop.

They say, "Always go to the bathroom when you have the chance." But for transgender and gender-nonconforming high school students, the reality is often the opposite: They go only when they absolutely have to.

All those years of parental training, only to arrive at the high school and avoid going at all if possible.

Senior transgender student Connor Covert said he was laughed at when he went into the women's restroom freshman year. He started using the men's restroom this year, and it's still not ideal. "I still get a little anxious about it, just because there are still some people at the school who are not nice people," he said.

Covert said that although the men's restroom is more comfortable for him, he still feels uneasy. "For, like, the past three years, I rarely use the bathroom in school unless I have to," he said.

> **"For, like, the past three years, I rarely use the bathroom in school unless I have to."**
>
> Connor Covert, senior

According to GLSEN, an advocacy group that works to ensure every student is valued and respected -- regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity or expression -- nearly two thirds of transgender students avoid using school bathrooms to avoid verbal or physical harassment.

In recent years, the definition of gender has expanded beyond male and female, or masculine and feminine, to include identities such as transgender, cisgender and gender nonconforming. Gender refers to both identity and expression, which is the way someone demonstrates identity, typically through clothing, hair styles or behavior, such as body language.

Sex refers to the biological difference between males and females, such as genitalia and genetic differences. A cisgender person's gender identity is the same as their birth sex. For example, a baby born biologically male later identifies as male. A transgender person's identity does not correspond with their birth sex; a baby born biologically male later identifies as female, for example.

A gender-nonconforming person's behavior or appearance does not align with prevailing cultural and social expectations. For example, a girl who identifies as female may wear clothing considered masculine or may wear a

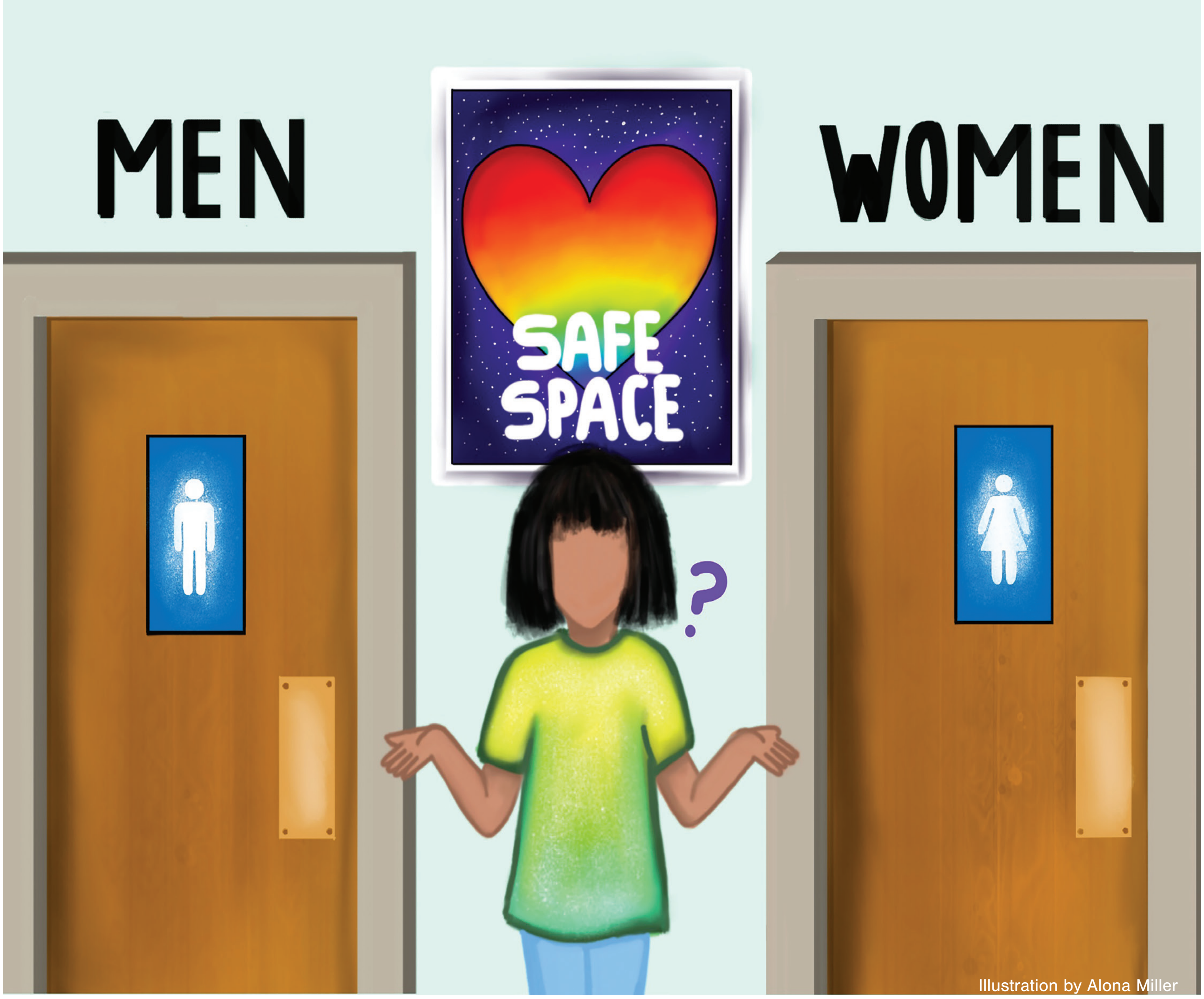


Illustration by Alona Miller

short hairstyle typical of boys. This form of gender expression was dubbed "tomboy" in the late 16th century.

As more transgender and gender-nonconforming people have come out, federal laws governing protections and accommodations for them are in flux. Under the administration of President Barack Obama, Title IX, a federal law that prohibits discrimination based on sex in educational settings, was interpreted to include gender identity. Since taking office, President Donald Trump has rescinded that interpretation.

However, both the federal court and appellate court in Cincinnati have ruled that public schools in its jurisdiction must accommodate transgender and gender-nonconforming students, and that remains the law for now. The appellate court's decision came after the Trump administration revoked the Obama administration's Title IX guidance.

But those federal court decisions do not require schools to create gender-neutral restrooms. Providing a single-user restroom that anyone can use, as Shaker does at the high school, is enough. Schools cannot force transgender or gender-nonconforming students to use the single-user facility; they can only make it available to everyone.

Schools that create full gender-neutral restrooms go beyond what the law requires. Attorneys are advising districts that are considering building new schools or significantly renovating existing buildings to include gender-neutral restrooms in their plans.

This question will likely reach the U.S. Supreme Court as a constitutional rather than Title IX matter.

Shaker prides itself on its progressive views and actions. At the same time, transgender and gender-nonconforming students feel limited by their singular option. The high school doesn't have a gender-neutral restroom or locker room. There is a single-user restroom in the nurse's office, open to everyone, which is located on the first floor directly across the hall from the women's staff lounge.

Junior Finn Cohen is transgender. He said a gender-neutral restroom in the high school would feel like a big step toward accepting the LGBTQ community and students' diverse identities. "I'd probably cry of happiness," he said.

> **"I identify as male, and so whenever I use the women's restroom, it feels like my identity is being invalidated."**
>
> Finn Cohen, junior

According to Principal Jonathan Kuehnle, who was placed on administrative leave Nov. 1, Shaker has an unofficial practice in place but no policy. A practice is something the school does daily, but there is no legal accountability involved. The high school's restroom practice allows students to use the restroom that corresponds with their gender identity without punishment.

On the other hand, a policy is formally presented as an expectation. "There is no board policy that dictates that level of bathroom usage, but as far as being good, compassionate human beings in the high school, that has been our practice since I've been here," Kuehnle said.

According to Dr. Marla Robinson, chief of staff, the district cannot create a policy in response to every request but will seek solutions in practice. "If a family comes and makes a request, it is our expectation as building leaders to meet with families and resolve the problem," she said. Resolving that problem is finding a safe bathroom for those students, she explained.

For some, relying on a practice instead of adopting a policy is a crucial distinction.

To become a policy, a proposal is reviewed three times by the Board of Education. Board members and others can make changes, and on the third review, the Board votes on whether or not to adopt the policy.

Robinson said Shaker usually initiates a policy proposal at the recommendation of the Ohio School Boards Association, which monitors state law changes and advises districts to amend their policies accordingly. "Most of our policies come from changes of law," she said.

Kuehnle said that there has been no board policy change about gender-neutral restrooms because of a lack of clear guidance at the federal level. "In the meantime, we continue our practice about using the restroom of which you identify and providing separate, private facilities as so desired," he said.

Robinson said the restroom situation needs to be handled with sensitivity. "We try to meet the needs of all students and have them feel safe," she said.

The restroom in nurse Paula Damm's office is the only single-user restroom available to students. "I tell everybody they're allowed to use the bathroom because people may not want to disclose to me

RESTROOOM RIGHTS IN FLUX

2012
Cities started to create single-stall, gender-neutral restooms. (Austin, Tex.; Berkeley, Calif.; Philadelphia; Santa Fe, N.M.; and Seattle)

November 2015
Some public schools adopted policies allowing transgender students to use private changing and showering facilities.

April 2016
Then-candidate Donald Trump said students should be able to use restrooms that they feel most comfortable in.

May 2016
Obama instructs public schools to let transgender students use bathrooms that match their identity.

if they're gender nonconforming," she said.

Although this bathroom is open to everyone, the nurse's office is closed during ninth period, and some days there is a substitute.

Transgender junior Jade Orazi said, "If there's a sub for the nurse, she might give you weird looks."

Damm said years ago she asked one student why he used her restroom every day, and he told her that students stuck their phones under the stall and took pictures of him in the other restrooms. But she does not ask students why or make assumptions about their choice. "I don't jump to the conclusion that that is the reason why. It's not really my business," she said.

Kuehnle said he looked into implementing a gender-neutral restroom during his first year at Shaker and was told by district personnel that community members felt uncomfortable about the idea.

Community views are not the only obstacle to a gender-neutral restroom. Federal instructions are unclear, and some state and federal legislators have proposed laws that would punish people for using

The nurse has a single-user restroom open to everyone. It is located inside the nurse's office on the first floor, across from the women's staff lounge. **Photo by David Vahey**

July 2016
Cleveland City Council passes legislation to allow transgender people to use the restroom, locker room or shower that aligns with their identify.

February 2017
President Donald Trump revokes Obama's guidance about allowing transgender students to use bathrooms of their choice.

April 2017
Nineteen states and more than 200 municipalities have anti-discrimination laws and ordinances allowing transgender people to use restrooms that corrrespond with their identities.

May 2018
A federal district court rules in favor of Gavin Grimm, a transgender student, who sought to use the men's restroom at his Virginia high school. Parents objected, and officials refused him. He sued on Title IX grounds.

public restrooms based on their gender identity or expression.

In 2013, Arizona lawmaker John Kavanaugh presented a bill subjecting people to jail for using a public restroom that didn't match the sex on their birth certificate. He changed the bill soon after facing heated resistance from protestors. Kavanaugh's objective was to make it so "no person or business shall be civilly or criminally liable for denying access to privacy areas based on gender identity or expression."

In 2016, North Carolina passed a law that required people to use public restrooms that correspond with the sex noted on their birth certificates. In 2017, the N.C. legislature repealed the law.

In May 2016, Obama issued a directive telling each public school to permit students to use the restroom corresponding with their gender identity. Schools that did not comply could face lawsuits or loss of federal funding.

When Trump took office in January 2017, he reversed Obama's directive. He said that the decision should be made by public schools and states instead of the federal government. Because of the reversal, public school restrooms need not accommodate all gender identities.

For transgender or gender-nonconforming students, it is difficult to find a restroom they are comfortable using. "I identify as male, and so whenever I use the women's restroom, it feels like my identity is being invalidated," Finn Cohen said.

He said the experience of using the men's or women's restroom is terrifying. "Sometimes, I'll walk to one bathroom and see somebody going in and I'll turn around and walk to the other bathroom," he said.

One student, who wished to remain anonymous because she is closeted, said having a unisex restroom would make it safer for many students because of the risk of abuse. "There's always a feeling of not belonging in there," she continued.

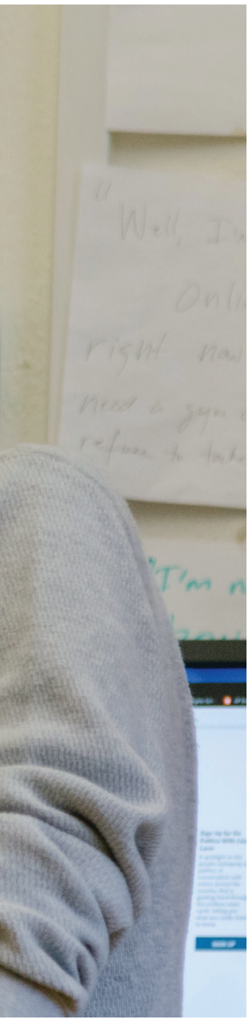
Becca Mui, education manager at GLSEN, said schools should accommodate everyone. "All schools should have gender-inclusive bathrooms for any one of their students, faculty members or visitors to use so that everyone

Senior Connor Covert, president of the club, leads a Gender and Sexuality Alliance meeting Oct. 25 in Room 231. **Photo by David Vahey**

in the school community can access this basic and fundamental need," she said. "These spaces are useful for everyone, but can be a vital support for trans and gender-nonconforming students."

Orazi said some people don't feel right in either men's or women's restrooms. "For people who are gender neutral or gender fluid," a gender-neutral restroom "is literally the only place that they feel they can go," she said. "They don't feel right in either."

According to Covert, for gender-nonconforming students, it often feels wrong to use the men's or women's restroom. "It's still labeling to go into the men's or women's restroom, even if they are comfortable with themselves," he said.



Shaker community members have reflected this sentiment.

Shaker parent Clyde Christian said that he would be fine with Shaker creating a gender-neutral restroom and that people make it out to be more than it really is. "I think putting a label on it is where you get the emotions," he said.

Shaker parent Dana Hubbard said that she thinks students should "not have to pick between two things they don't necessarily think they are, or risk the harassment."

Hubbard said that having a gender-neutral restroom is about inclusion and having a safe space for everybody. "Everyone deserves a place that they feel safe and don't have to risk abuse or harassment or feeling like they don't belong," said Hubbard, who works at Cleveland State University, where there are single-user restrooms labeled "All Identities Welcome."

But, a community member requested anonymity because "the environment now is so charged politically, and no matter what you say, you're going to make someone mad." She said that she would oppose such a move. "I just think that there are other things in the world that are more important than that," she said.

Marie Jones, parent of a high school student, said she would oppose implementing a gender-neutral restroom. "I would not be comfortable with it because I don't want a horny little boy in there harassing my daughter," she said.

According to Transequality.org, a letter signed by school officials from Kentucky, Massachusetts, California, Washington, Illinois, New York and Oregon relates success in providing transgender students with facilities that accommodate their identities. The letter stated that the schools have not "experienced transgender students or any other students attempting to be dishonest or break the rules. To the contrary, our transgender students simply want to be safe while using school facilities."

"All schools should have private, gender-neutral bathrooms for any student to use, in the same, normal way that homes have bathrooms for guests to use, and many restaurants have bathrooms that are not labeled for the sexes," the GLSEN website states.

Another resource, REFUGE Restrooms, is an online database that seeks to provide a safe restroom for everybody. Users can search for a location, and a list of safe restrooms will be provided.

Approximately 150 colleges and universities maintain gender-neutral restrooms that are safe for gender non-conforming individuals. Examples in Ohio include Cleveland State University, Kent State University, The Ohio State University and Case Western Reserve University.

Ohio public schools are joining this movement. Troy City Schools west of Columbus implemented gender-neutral restrooms. So did Fairmount High School outside of Dayton. Walnut Hills High School, near Cincinnati, has three gender-neutral bathrooms because "the students wanted it," according to their principal. No legal action has been taken against those schools by the state or federal government.

Interim Superintendent Dr. Stephen Wilkins declined to be interviewed for this story.

Freshman Liam Callam said he is for gender-neutral restrooms. "I am supporting some of my friends. I respect that they are gay or trans," he said.

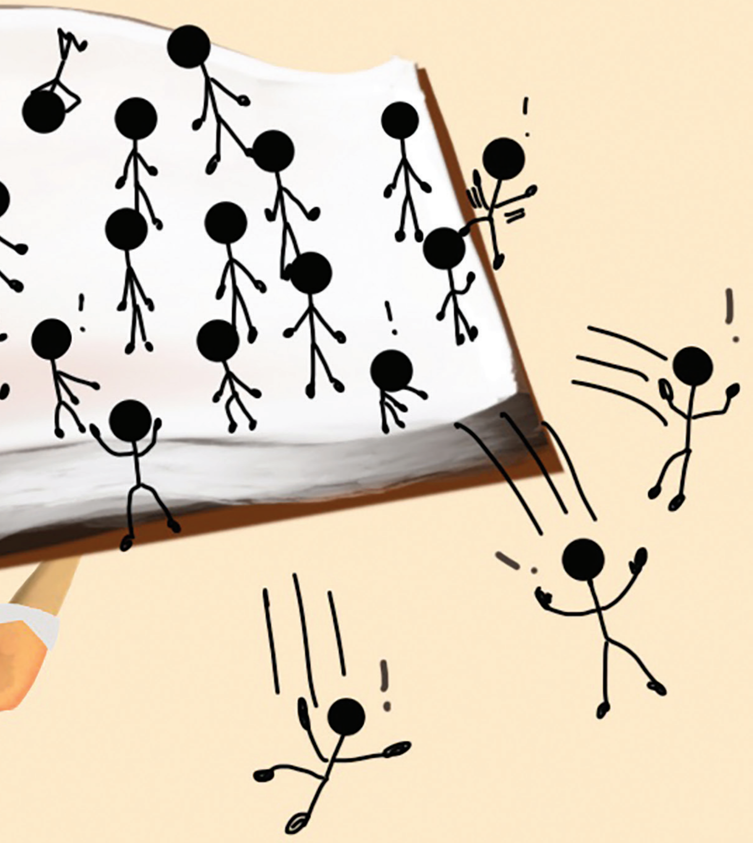
Callam said, "That is their point of view, that's how they feel. You shouldn't judge them."

How Many are Too Many?

According to educators, class size matters; that hasn't stopped classes from expanding at Shaker

By Ashley Sah, Investigations Reporter

Illustration by Alona Miller



It doesn't matter how large a class size is -- a great teacher can handle a class of 50 students, former Superintendent Dr. Gregory Hutchings, Jr. said in his first appearance before the faculty March 13, 2014.

This comment, which he made during his candidate appearance in the high school's upper cafeteria, became part of the class size debate, which has been contentious among teachers, parents, government officials and researchers for decades.

But Shaker teachers and students agree: Class size makes a difference in learning experience.

Jeffrey Rice teaches math at the high school. He said larger class sizes prevent teachers from giving more time to each student. "When you don't have time to respond to questions and create more individualized assignments for people, there is a negative impact on the students," he said.

A policy brief published by the National Education Policy Center titled "Does Class Size Matter?" argues that small class sizes are effective because they result in "a mixture of higher levels of student engagement, increased time on task, and the opportunity small classes provide for high-quality teachers to better tailor their instruction to the students in the class." A policy brief summarizes an issue and suggests the best way to solve it.

"I personally perform better in smaller class sizes because I feel more comfortable with the students around me, so that means I feel more open to saying my ideas and participating," sophomore Jaclyn Shin said.

An article by the Center for Public Education on class size stated, "A class size of no more than 18 students per teacher is required to produce the greatest benefit."

While the policies and arguments on class size are abundant, credible research on how class sizes affect student achievement is lacking.

One influential experiment on the subject was conducted in the United States: Project Student Teacher Achievement Ratio, also known as Project STAR.

Project STAR was administered in 1985 by Tennessee's State Department of Education to study the effect of class size on student achievement from kindergarten to third grade. The study was done in 76 elementary schools.

The study involved randomly placing more than 10,000 kindergarten students into three different types of classes: regular class sizes of 22 or 23 students, regular class sizes with a full-time teacher's aide, and reduced class sizes of 15 students.

Students in the smaller classes consistently performed better on standardized tests and displayed increased levels of engagement. The reduced class sizes also gave greater benefit to minority and economically-disadvantaged students.

Smaller classes in Project STAR allowed teachers to use more personalized strategies to improve learning. "They closely monitored the progress of student learning in their classes, were able to re-teach using alternative strategies when children did not learn a concept, had excellent organizational skills, and maintained superior personal interactions with their students," the brief stated.

The Center for Public Education said that in order to reap the benefits of reduced class sizes, they should be coupled with a rigorous academic curriculum and proper teacher training.

The article from the Center for Public Education stated, "The more years spent in reduced classes, the longer lasting the benefits."

However, reducing class size means hiring more teachers. "Class-size reductions also involve costly, upfront expenditures. Whether these benefits justify further expenditures is, in large part, an empirical question," a research paper, "The Non-Cognitive Returns to Class Size," stated.

"The Non-Cognitive Returns to Class Size" was published by the National Bureau of Economic Research and was written by Dr. Thomas Dee, a professor of education at Stanford University and Research Associate of NBER, and Dr. Martin West, a professor of education at Harvard University and Research Fellow of NBER.

The paper stated that the increase in students' lifetime earnings implied by class-size reduction exceeds the cost of the reduction.

According to the brief published by NEPC, other statewide initiatives to reduce class size have not strongly affected student performance because newly hired teachers were less experienced. The brief stated, "These impacts may have been offset because many inexperienced teachers had to be hired to staff the new classrooms, reducing average teacher quality."

More than 30 students crowd math conferences in Room 201 on Oct 25.
Photo by David Vahey

Subsequent studies of Project STAR have linked reduced class sizes to lower rates of teen pregnancy and juvenile criminal behavior and increased rates of high school graduation and college attendance.

Science teacher William Scanlon said that a connection between teacher and student is important to student success. "It shows that student that someone cares about them, they're interested in how they're doing, they're paying attention to them," he said. "That kind of connection makes kids want to work hard and do well in the class."

"With a larger class, it's difficult to make a connection with each student. When you have a smaller class, you can focus on kids and make sure that if something is going on, you're there for them and you're able to help them out," he said.

English Department Chairwoman Emily Shrestha said that larger class sizes make it challenging to hold inclusive class discussions. "If you have 30 students in a class, and the class is only 50 minutes long, that's less time that each student is going to get to participate in class," she said.

According to an Aug. 24 Shaker Heights Board of Education document, the high school's overall average

class size is “20-24 students,” excluding classes in the English Department. Currently there are 32 English classes with 24 or more students. The largest class in the English Deparment has 31 students.

Twenty to 24 students doesn’t sound very big; however this average is still above the ideal class size. The policy brief stated, “some researchers conclude that the evidence supports better outcomes only if classes are below some threshold number such as 15 or 20.”

“I have found that the most effective class sizes are the ones with 15 to 20 kids in the room,” Rice said.

According to Board documents, 11 classes in the high school have more 28 students this year. All of these classes are honors or AP courses.

“Lower student-teacher ratios in the core classes are intended to allow for students to have more teacher support in order to achieve success," the Aug. 24 Board document stated.

"That's fine, because everyone is getting the education that is appropriate for them," said Principal Jonathan Kuehnle, who was placed on administrative leave Nov. 1.

"We tend to keep core classes a little bit smaller just because the honors kids are extremely capable," said Dr. Ann Spurrier, assistant principal. Spurrier creates the master class schedule for the high school.

Spurrier said that the number of classes, and class sizes of each subject, are determined by Shaker staff in annual sectioning meetings. "The department chairmen, Mr. Kuehnle and I sit down every year and look at all the requests and decide together, collaboratively, how many sections of each class are offered," she said.

"We all sit down and look at all the course requests that students have put in. We look at all that data, we look at the teaching licenses of everyone — who can teach what," Kuehnle said. "We start doing the math."

Kuehnle explained that one factor that strongly affects class size is the number of qualified teachers available. "We have to be careful, because we don't have unlimited staff," he said. "I personally believe small class sizes are better, but I have to balance that belief against the hard reality of district finances."

But the Board has already voted to cut the number of teachers in Shaker.

In a June 12 resolution, the Board agreed to abolish 10.8 full-time teaching positions through attrition "based upon financial reasons/budgetary constraints and decreased enrollment of pupils."

Full-time equivalency teachers work full time; teachers who work part time are considered a fraction of a FTE teacher. Attrition is the elimination of a position after the person holding that position retires or leaves for any other reason.

In keeping with the Board resolution, the high school lost 3.8 FTE teaching positions: one full-time math teacher, one full-time English teacher, one part-time, or .8, social studies teacher, and one full-time intervention specialist. The Board cut these positions through attrition before the 2018-2019 school year.

In a Shakerite article published last year, then-Investigations Editor Emet Celeste-Cohen reported on the Public Finance Resources prediction that the school district will lose an estimated 342 students over the next four years.

The district hired PFR to forecast changes in enrollment and their effect on finances. The PFR report predicted the district would lose $3,379,764 in state funding, which is tied to enrollment, over the next five years as a result of the decline.

In keeping with the predicted enrollment decline, the Board can abolish teaching positions through attrition or Reduction In Force. RIF is a reduction in staffing precipitated by a cut or anticipated cut in funding. School districts usually enact RIFs when they experience a sharp decline in enrollment.

According to the June 12 Board memorandum, the district created four options for how to deal with

> **"Our teachers are very dedicated to seeing the students to succeed to the highest level possible, and large class sizes are a deterrent of that."**
>
> Jeffrey Rice, math teacher

declining enrollment in the future. Option 1 includes no change; Option 2 includes abolishing teacher positions through attrition; Option 3 includes abolishing teacher positions through attrition and reduction in force during the 2019-2020 school year; and Option 4 includes abolishing teacher positions through attrition and RIF during the 2018-2019 school year.

According to the Executive Director of Communications Scott Stephens, the Board voted June 12 to enact Option 3: eliminating 10.8 FTE teachers by the 2018-2019 school year and eliminating 19 additional positions by 2019-2020 school year.

Fourteen of those jobs are teaching positions: six elementary teachers, four middle school teachers, three high school teachers and one support teacher. Three administrative and two clerical positions will also be cut in the 2018-2019 school year.

In an editorial published Oct. 15 by the Shaker Heights Teachers' Association, middle school teacher Michael Sears argues that Reduction in Force should not be enacted. "Students are already suffering from the cuts made on June 12. How could the Board think even more drastic cuts won't have a negative impact on the Shaker experience for students?" he wrote.

According to the editorial, the cuts made by the Board through attrition have enlarged class sizes. "The elimination of a Language and Literature teaching position at the high school created such large classes that a part time teacher had to be hired in August. Even so, many classes have close to 30 students.

"Intervention specialist positions were eliminated at the middle school and the high school. There have been concerns in both buildings about how student needs will be met without additional staff," Sears wrote.

After the June 12 Board meeting, Hutchings returned to Alexandria, Virginia to become superintendent of the Alexandria City Public Schools. Current Board class size policy states, "The Board believes students will directly benefit from small class size when coupled with high quality instruction."

"Our teachers are very dedicated to seeing the students succeed to the highest level possible," said Rice, "and large class sizes are a deterrent of that."

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The Problem With School Rankings

David Vahey

State-mandated report cards do not do justice to Shaker Schools, according to administrators

Hilary Shakelton *Investigations Editor*

A community is known by the schools it keeps.

But is Shaker average? According to the Ohio Department of Education, yes.

However, the district boasts 11 National Merit Semifinalists from the Class of 2019, and 258 colleges worldwide accepted members of the Class of 2018.

How can both of these things true?

Because standardized state report cards have become the prevailing measurement of a school's performance. The ODE states that its report cards "measure district and school performance in the areas most critical to success in learning."

Although the district is widely acclaimed, Shaker fares poorly when compared to some other public schools by the ODE. The report card measures six categories: achievement, gap closing, kindergarten through grade three literacy, graduation, progress and preparation for success.

Shaker schools' component grade for 2017-2018, calculated by finding the weighted average of all six categories, rates a perfectly average C.

"I'd say there is some significant bias to it," said Chris Rateno, director of student data systems and accountability. The report cards "are not perfect by any means."

According to Stanford University professor Sean Reardon, who studies poverty and inequality in education, these report cards favor districts that can dedicate more money to their schools.

The letter grade a school receives in each category is based on a range of measures: college acceptance rates, honors diplomas, industry-recognized credentials, Advanced Placement test scores, International Baccalaureate test scores, college credit and test scores.

Since the 2012-13 school year, Ohio has used three different standardized test companies for its mandatory K-12 testing. First, the Ohio Achievement Assessments were its system of evaluation. In 2014, the state began administering Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Career assessments. Ohio's membership in the PARCC consortium was short-lived; a new assessment was developed for evaluation and issued by the American Institute of Research. The AIR test was first administered during the 2015-16 school year.

Though the specific testing method has shifted, the state report cards are dependent upon the same measures.

Dr. John Morris, president of the Shaker Heights Teachers' Association, offered reasons for Shaker's uneven performance on the ODE tests. "I think we have two things going on: a district that does not teach to the test, and a social economically heterogeneous population. That means some kids come to school with a lot of background knowledge, and some kids come to school with not as many advantages, and that's where we get this divergence in how kids do on test scores," he said.

Reardon said that test scores don't represent some important measures. "Test scores, particularly the rate of growth in scores, are useful but incomplete measures of school [or] district quality. They don't measure other aspects of school quality, such as how well they help children develop creativity, cooperation skills, empathy, moral character and so on," Reardon stated in an email interview.

Although the state report cards are the typical way to rank schools, alternate ways of measuring the strength of school districts have been published.

In late 2017, the New York Times published "How Effective is Your School District?" In the article, reporters reference a study completed by Reardon that ranks schools based on how much students learn from third to eighth grade.

The study also shows that socioeconomic status and school finances do necessarily govern how much students grow academically. Instead, the study indicates that some schools with less money have students who exhibit higher rates of "growth."

"It's important to separate wealth from school quality. Our data shows there are lots of places with good schools, as measured by test score growth, that are not wealthy," Reardon said.

Shaker finds itself in the lowest 6 percent of all schools measured in Reardon's test. Students' standardized test scores only grow 3.8 grade levels between third and eighth grade, according to his analysis.

Morris said that Shaker's high mobility rate affects student growth. "Because we're right on the edge of a major city, we might have a populous of people who might not be here for a long time. It just gives us an even more heterogeneous population based on mobility," Morris said.

Freshman Maclin Stupay offered another explanation. "We take too many standardized tests, and kids might not take them seriously because there are so many. I think we can improve these grades by specifying what tests these are, because they are a little bit much," he said.

Grandview Heights Schools in Columbus scored within the 96th percentile of all schools by Reardon's measures. Grandview Heights Superintendent Andy Culp said a combination of factors explains how well Grandview Heights scored, such as high-achieving students, supportive parents, personalized learning experiences and a low student-teacher ratio — the Grandview Heights student-teacher ratio is 12:1. Shaker's is 16:1.

However, Grandview Heights is an outlier among schools that typically do well by Reardon's measures, as most high-scoring schools have a low median household income and a high minority student population.

Grandview Heights is funded at an above state average per pupil expenditure. Nevertheless, Culp said his school routinely scores well on school rankings because their retention rate is very high. "Students that start here stay here, which is helpful in terms of impact on learning and growth," he said.

When Rateno sees low district grades based on state-mandated report cards, he reads them differently. "When you look at it, we did not do as bad as it looks, and we're growing. There's a lot of growth," he said.

In 2016, Shaker received Fs in eight categories. In 2017, Shaker received one F and two Ds. This year, there were no Fs. In all, Shaker improved in 17 of 21 indicators on the state report card. These indicators include scores on end of course exams from third to eighth grade and other end of course exams in high school.

> **"When you look at it, we did not do as bad as it looks, and we're growing. There's a lot of growth."**
>
> Chris Rateno,
> Director of
> Student Data

Rateno said that other types of scoring, based on holistic approaches, might be able to accurately evaluate Shaker. "Talk to students, get feedback from students, looking at success studies over time would be a definite way

Breaking Down the State Report Card

The Ohio Department of Education's method of grading schools and school districts is complex. Here are so explanations of ODE measures:

Within the component, or overall, grade, **achievement** is weighted at 20 percent, progress at 20 percent, graduation rate at 15 percent, gap closing at 15 percent, improving at-risk K-3 readers at 15 percent, and preparation for success at 15 percent.

This year, Shaker received a D in achievement, a D in progress, a B in gap closing, an A in graduation rates, a C in improving K-3 at-risk readers and a D in preparing for success.

The performance index, part of the achievement component of the report card, measures the test results of all students. The grade is calculated out of 120 points, and Shaker received an 89.2 points last year.

Districts receive higher scores if students take higher-level courses and score well on their end-of-course exams. The 74.3 percent Shaker received is low on the scale. In comparison, Solon High School received a 91.25 percent, and Indian Hill High School near Cincinnati received a 86.25 percent.

The **progress index** measures the growth students make based on past test results. The district received an F overall, but because gifted students received a B, the component grade was boosted to a C.

The **gap-closing component** measures how well a district's most vulnerable students are meeting performance expectations. The **graduation component** measures the percent of students who graduate within four years. In 2017, 94.2 percent of Shaker students graduated.

The **K-3 literacy component** measures how well schools improve at-risk, or struggling, K-3 students' reading levels. Coming into third grade, 292 Shaker students started "off track," in terms of their reading abilities. Once the year concluded, 143 students moved "on track," according to the ODE.

Districts are required to create Reading Improvement and Monitoring Plans for students not on track to become proficient in English Language Arts by the end of the third grade.

Shaker received nine deductions from its K-3 reading score. The number of students who moved on track (143) was subtracted by the nine deductions (to make 134), then divided by the number of students who started "off track" (292). That percentage is 45.9, which qualifies as a C.

These deductions are taken when students do not score proficient or higher on the Ohio state third grade English Language arts test and do not "receive services through a reading improvement and monitoring plan," according to the ODE.

Among Shaker third grade students last year, 99.4 percent met the state's Third Grade Reading Guarantee requirements for promotion to third grade, and 77.2 percent of third graders scored proficient on the state English Language Arts Test.

Finally, **preparation for success** measures how well students are prepared for future opportunities. This score is calculated by adding the "number of students that earned a remediation free score on all parts of the ACT or SAT, earned an honors diploma, and/or earned an industry-recognized credential" to the "number of students that count for .3 points each, because they scored a 3 or higher on at least one AP exam; a 4 or higher on at least one IB exam; and/or earned at least three college credits before leaving high school," divided by the graduation cohort, 875. Shaker scored a 57.1, which qualifies as a D.

In comparison, Hudson, with a median household income of $132,000, received four As, one B and one C from the ODE. Shaker's median household income is $76,000.

SHAKER STATE REPORT CARD

DISTRICT OVERVIEW	C
ACHIEVEMENT	D
PROGRESS	D
GAP CLOSING	B
GRADUATION RATE	A
IMPROVING AT RISK K-3 READERS	C
PREPARED FOR SUCCESS	D

"In general, test scores, particularly the rate of growth in scores, are useful, but incomplete," Reardon said

Rate of Growth as Measured by Reardon

School	%
Ottowa Hills	95
Green Local - Smithville	85
Avon Lake City	76
Gahanna-Jefferson	68
Lucas School	40
Parkway Local	31
Northeastern Local - Defiance	8
Sandusky City	6
Shaker Heights	6

to do it. Look at the opportunities that exist as opposed to other schools," he said.

Although Shaker has not conducted a holistic study -- which would be costly -- the district does annually publish a report titled "Measuring What Matters," which presents "data on many dimensions of quality that are important to the education of children."

These include parental involvement, motivated students, community involvement, varying extracurricular activities, high-quality curriculum, good teachers, and an education that brings forth diverse learning styles.

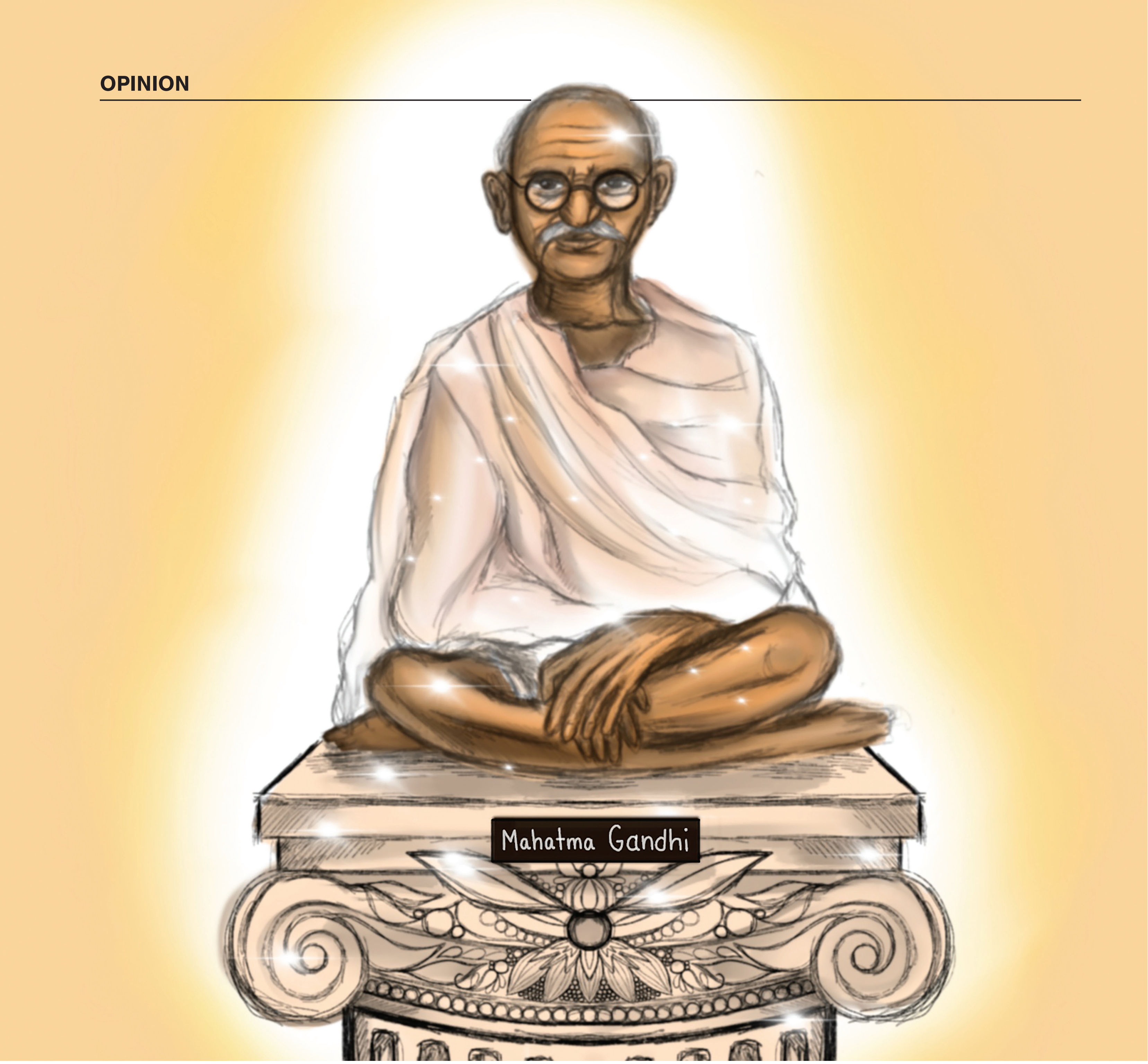
"Really, that's more of a qualitative analysis, and that's a better way to do [ranking] than quantitative," Rateno said.

"I think Shaker is honestly is one of the best [high schools] in the country. I think basically the things that make us not do well on tests are our strengths," Morris said.

Stronger indicators of a district's success include "looking at the number of kids who go to two-to-four-year colleges, kids who are socring about 19 on the ACT, the number of kids involved in extracurriculars, the number of students in sports," he said.

There is no perfect way to rank Shaker schools — or any schools.

Unless "multiple measures and multiple metrics, as opposed to one measure, on one day, at one specific time," are used to rank schools such as Shaker, results will be skewed, Rateno said.



Heroes are Human, Too

We should not oversimplify the lives of historical figures

By Olivia Warren, Curriculum Columnist
Illustration by Alona Miller

I am not a fan of Gandhi.

I know this comes as a shock, as Gandhi is synonymous with good, like Einstein with genius.

In history class, we learn of his civil rights efforts in South Africa, his fight to gain independence for India and his crusade for nonviolence. He starved himself to protest the unfair policies of England. He was a constant source of light. But every radiant moon has a rocky dark side.

Gandhi's dark side is known to few. He embodied purity as a devoted Hindu. While pious and pure in the public's eye, he abused his power to control the sexual behavior of his followers, according to The Washington Post.

He was a constant source of light. But every radiant moon has a rocky dark side.

Gandhi ran an ashram with his wife, a place for others to live in a safe, religious community. In order to stay in the ashram, the residents had to follow Gandhi's rules. Few people had a problem with any of his orders, as no one could disobey the great Mahatma Gandhi. Among the rules were requirements that husbands and wives could not sleep together or engage in any sexual activity, and some of the women were to participate in celibacy experiments with Gandhi.

We learn a simplified view of our world; we don't explore the nooks and crannies of the ambiguous parts of history. When we learn about the past actions of individuals, we should understand that no issue can be drawn in black and white. The complexities of humanity cannot be explained by labeling people with a "good" or "bad" nametag. We have to determine the weight of their actions ourselves.

Aristotle, for example, is arguably the most respected mind in philosophy and logic. Though I applaud his valuable contribution, I can't accept his statement that men are "better and more divine" than women.

Do others agree when he asserts that wives have a duty alike slavery to their husbands? I hope not.

None of my teachers has ever raised Aristotle's deplorable view of women, so I never saw this counterargument to his brilliance. Knowing this information makes me question how much praise he deserves, and how much of his philosophy I should adhere to. It should pose this question to all who study his life.

The problem with Gandhi and Aristotle is bigger than our history classes. It's a problem that American education needs to face.

Ohio education standards for American history include no mention of the racism that our country was founded on. Our founding fathers are hypocrites in the worst sense of the word; they secured freedom from their British oppressors while denying others their own.

What will we Americans learn 100 years from now about those we hate or admire today? Will Donald Trump's hateful rhetoric about African countries be part of the the curriculum, or will he be known as the hero of the working class? Will Robert Mueller be known as the servant of democracy, or its adversary?

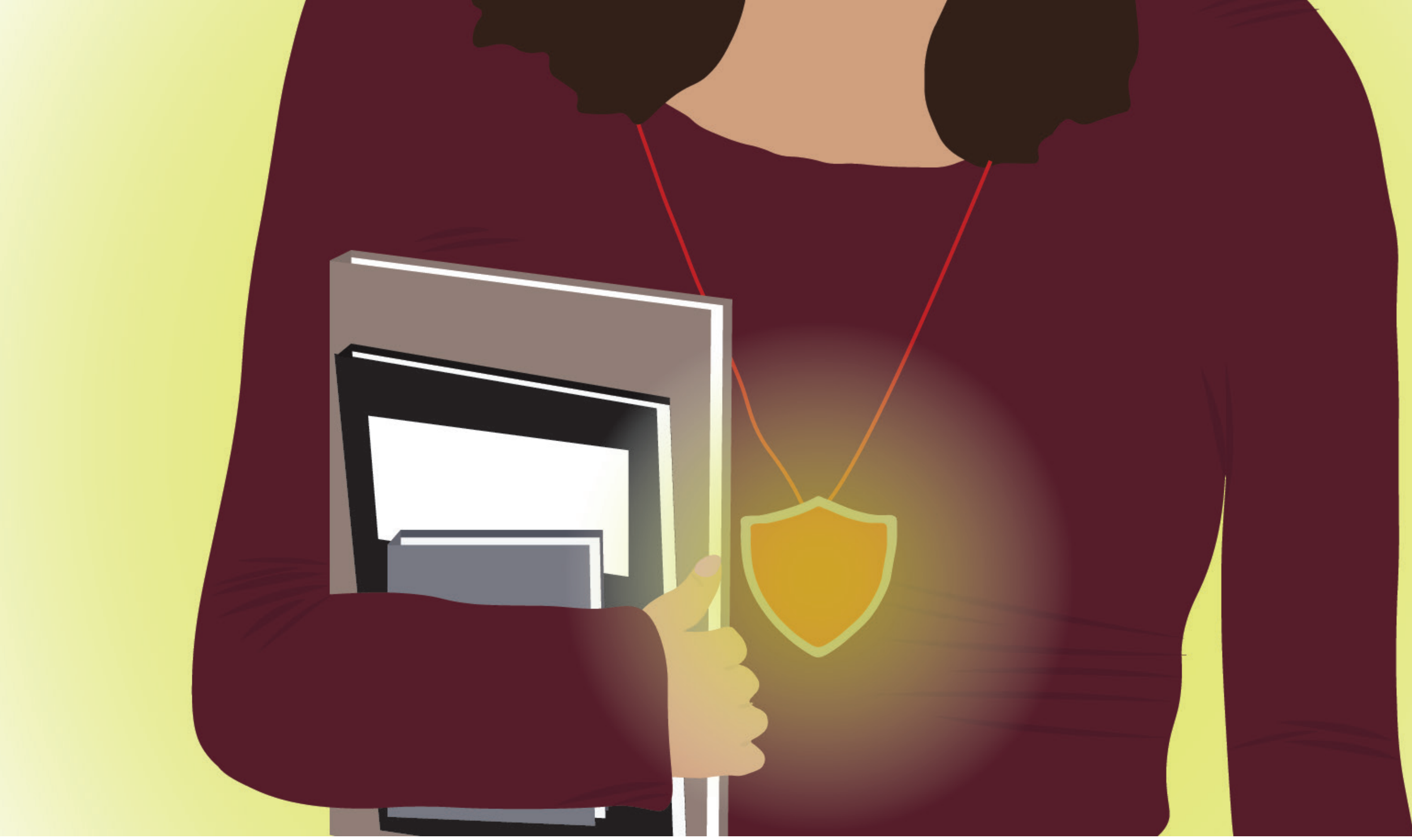
We act as though America is the face of freedom, the lighthouse for liberty across the globe. Yet it hasn't been 100 years since the first American woman voted. African Americans and Hispanics constitute 32 percent of the American population, but they comprise 56 percent of incarcerated Americans.

Women, African Americans, Native Americans, and others still suffer from America's history of oppression. We deny our full history and we turn a cheek to its evils. By ignoring them, we are not just obscuring the whole truth, but we are aggravating the problems facing America today.

There are ways to fix this, to be an informed citizen of the globe. Keeping up with honest news sources such as The New York Times or The Wall Street Journal allows you to read balanced accounts of events with facts not colored by an ulterior motive.

I chose to explore Gandhi because my history teacher chose to mention his misconduct during our study, thus offering a broader view of a revered historical figure.

It is our duty to go beyond what we are told to learn or to teach. Our curiosity should drive us to find the whole truth.



Plastic Does Not Protect Us

Shaker's ID policy will not keep students safe, contrary to what the district would have us believe

Ainsley Snyder Opinion Editor

Imagine a perfect world: All students, teachers and staff wear their IDs from the minute they enter the school to the minute they leave. When intruders enter the building, security spots them instantly, and they are escorted out.

But that is unrealistic. In reality, an intruding student would likely enter the school and walk through the hall. If stopped, the only consequence would be instruction from a security guard to put on an ID — and nothing further.

With its emphasis on the ID policy, administration is trying to make the school look safer to outsiders while ignoring calls for help from students inside the school who feel unsafe.

I, along with other female students, have shared instances of sexual harassment that we have faced in this district. We did this in hopes that the school would implement a policy to make us feel safe here. Students should not endure harassment and have to wait for the perpetrator to experience consequences. The district should take concrete steps to prevent an unsafe situation before it happens.

Additionally, the school has a history of not dealing with safety issues correctly or promptly.

On Sept. 10, 2013, a male

Ainsley Snyder

student raped a female student during the school day. The administration told teachers to “avoid any conversations regarding [the rape],” according to the Sept. 2013 Shakerite story “Suspect in Alleged Rape Will Likely Face Expulsion.”

On Oct. 7, 2015, three Instagram direct message from an anonymous user circulated through the school and community. The first one began, “I am coming with a rifle then I will blow the b*** up.” The second stated, “I heard everyone believes it’s a joke. Ha Ha the school doesn’t know I can do it at anytime just be ready everyone in that school will have their heads blown up or die in an explosion by the end of the week.” A third message read, “Too bad there aren’t metal detectors ha ha I might go to that school ha ha ha.”

The district decided that it was still safe for students and teachers to attend school that day, and the administration did not tell students about what was happening. The only thing students heard was a cryptic announcement asking teachers to check their email. Chaos ensued as hundreds of concerned parents called to excuse their children.

Last year, former social studies teacher and IB Diploma Programme Coordinator Timothy Mitchell was indicted on sexual assault charges for his actions 24 years ago. Mitchell pled guilty to a lesser charge of child endangerment and admitted taking his 16-year-old student to a Cleveland Indians game, buying her alcohol, giving her marijuana and having sex with her.

Instead of talking to Mitchell’s former students about what had happened, the district offered them counseling. However, the offer was not announced to the student body directly. And instead of figuring out a way to best prevent Mitchell’s crime from reoccurring, district administration simply painted over his face on a mural, hoping this would end the discomfort that students felt in the school.

Last year, the school created another blanket solution reminiscent of the ID policy: the anonymous tip line. Created to allow reports of harassment, the tip line is practically useless. It is hidden in the Shaker website, and students do not have to disclose their identities when submitting reports, which compromises the validity of a complaints.

Shaker covers up their failures, but capitalizes on what it considers to be successes.

This year, a student held the door open for a 19-year-old male who was entering the school. In an announcement to students and faculty the next day, Kuehnle said security immediately recognized the intruder as an outsider and approached him. After running from the building, he was arrested. It was determined later that he was a felon.

But how did this work?

Did security only identify him as an intruder because he was not wearing an ID? Or was it because he simply looked older than other adolescents in the building? Or unfamiliar? I walk through the halls every day without my lanyard around my neck. I have only been asked to put it on once by an administrator, who simply continued walking rather than ensuring that I complied.

If administrators want to use their tale of catching a felon to inspire students to wear IDs, then they need to approach and reprimand every individual who walks into the building without their ID on. That is the majority of students.

If the school continues to push for more safety, then the administration needs to create change for students who do not feel safe around peers or teachers.

A bright red lanyard and piece of plastic slung around our necks will not promote safety in the school unless the policy is properly implemented. Threats in this building are not caused by anonymous intruders, but by fellow students and adults.

Their IDs are not the problem.

What About Mental Health?

We all must be conscious of students' state of mind

By Lauren Sheperd, Education Columnist
Illustration by Alona Miller

Her breath begins to quicken. Her hands are shaking, her palms sweating as she asks to use the restroom. Sprinting out of her Spanish classroom and into a bathroom stall, she lets out silent screams as tears stream down her face. It feels like her throat is closing.

According to the Child Mind Institute, by the time teenagers graduate high school, 31.9 percent of them will have developed some sort of anxiety disorder. During the short time I have been in high school, too many of my friends have become part of this statistic.

While I haven't developed clinical anxiety, I do experience panic attacks and high levels of anxiety. It's a problem that affects all aspects of my life.

I am not the only person at Shaker Heights High School who has experienced some part of this disorder. So many students have endured experiences similar to or worse than mine.

In 2017, 22.7 percent of students who took Cuyahoga County's Youth Risk Behavior Survey reported that they saw a mental health professional about stress and depression.

According to the Child Mind Institute, depression and bipolar disorder affect 14.3 percent of high school students. This statistic could include one of your friends. How many of us know a student who struggles with depression or anxiety?

How many of us know a student who regularly stays up doing homework until three in the morning because anxiety attacks make it difficult to complete assignments?

How many of us have seen a student come to school after getting two hours of sleep, clearly too tired to participate in class?

These students push themselves because of a fear too many of us share: falling behind in their classes.

The culture in our school pressures every student to succeed in the same way. Every student is expected to push themselves as hard as possible in every area of their life in order to secure a comfortable future.

One would assume that school administration would take extreme measures to protect its students. After all, the school's number one priority, as they always say, is our safety. Though many say it isn't the school's responsibility to fix the problem, the school has implemented resources such as flex nights or the zen room. But it's not enough.

What else should be done?

While administration and some parents believe mental health is a student's responsibility, the school should not avoid the subject. Much of what causes anxiety could be changed by the school.

The national conversation about teenage mental health is beginning to expand, and it is important that Shaker follows this trend with conversations of our own.

We need a nation-wide intervention with students to explain that the amount of sleep they lose, or how mentally exhausted they are, is not a measure of success. Both are unhealthy and self-destructive ways of thinking. This conversation needs to encourage students to take care of themselves, and it needs to be led by adults. Because, for us, exhaustion is all we've ever known.

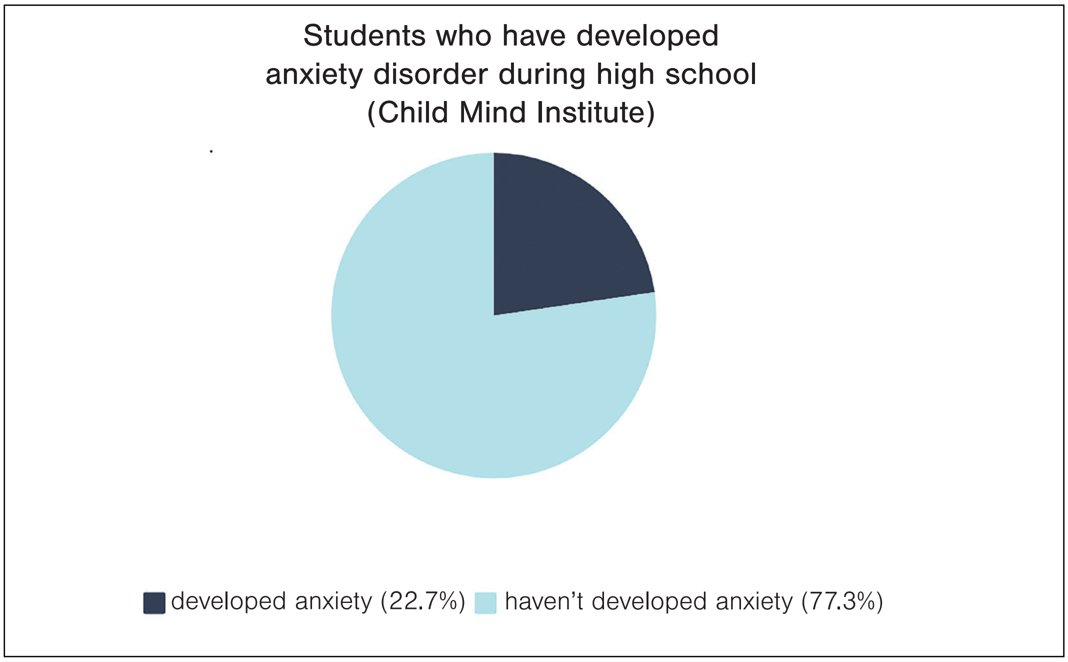
Priorities need to change.

We must treat mental illness as seriously as physical illness. Students should feel comfortable telling their teachers they need to leave class and visit the nurse because of something they're struggling with mentally.

By eliminating this stigma, more students will feel free to ask for help rather than suffering in isolation.

Another necessity is changing the attitude about how students

The national conversation about teenage mental health is beginning to expand, and it is important that Shaker follows this trend.



choose what classes to take.

Students are always expected to challenge themselves, which is good.

However, there is such thing as being too challenged. Most students, teachers, parents and administrators don't address this.

Shaker schools and parents flaunt students who get into top colleges, which creates a misconception among other, younger students that they must get into these schools to be someone the district and their family are proud of.

While it can't be expected that high school students know exactly what they want to do with their lives, most know where their general interests lie.

For example, I dropped down a math level to make room to succeed in AP U.S. History, a course that I am fascinated by.

Dropping down to Algebra 2 Honors from 10 Honors Math gave me more time to do homework for other classes because my nightly workload for math decreased significantly. The decision allows me to get more sleep, which makes me a better student and more importantly, mentally healthier.

Often, students take the highest level classes possible to please a college, but the decision to take a class should be a decision to make the student happy, not to impress a man or woman sitting in an admissions office hundreds of miles away.

When I dropped down a math level, all I heard from my friends was that I was capable of succeeding and should remain enrolled. What most of them didn't understand was that I was protecting my mental health.

The school also needs to begin the process of eliminating the competitive culture that has existed at Shaker for too long.

Often, when tests or essays are passed back, students share their scores with peers. This practice can cause stress and even induce panic attacks when students realize they didn't perform as well as others. It certainly has for me.

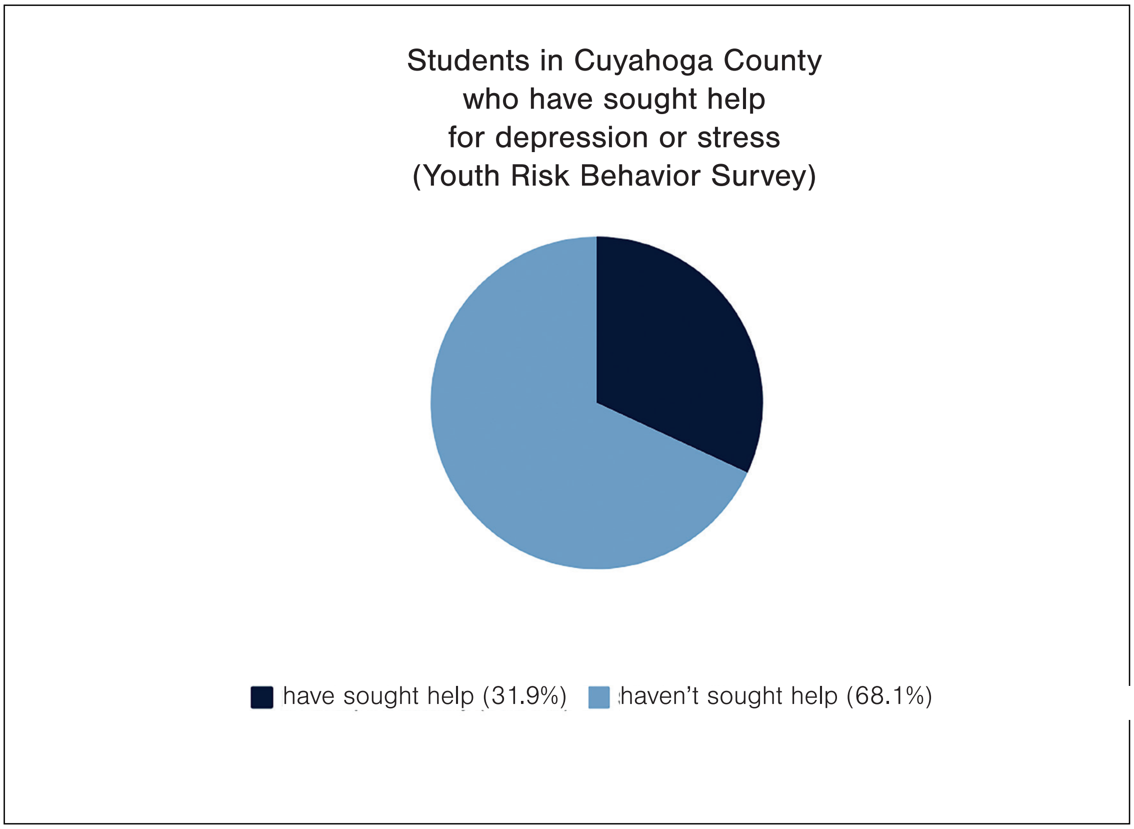
Students need to understand that while there is peer pressure to share grades, they don't have to. And it would be healthier not to.

When students discuss scores, whether in person or over text or on social media, they are doing so to make themselves more confident or less anxious.

Students who do well on a test will share their scores to boost their self esteem through positive feedback from peers. Students who don't earn a good grade on an assignment share scores to feel better by learning that other students did the same.

Last month, after an English test score was entered into ProgressBook, my phone blew up. Almost all of my classmates were sharing their scores, and nearly everyone had earned a higher score than I did. It

Listen to a conversation with the columnist who wrote this piece in our podcast, The Shake.



> **Students need to understand that while there is peer pressure to share grades, they don't have to. And it would be healthier not to.**

was discouraging.

It was like looking at the same bad score for the first time all over again.

I am sure I am not the only student at Shaker Heights High School who has fallen victim to this destructive habit.

Teachers must at least attempt to put a stop to the practice, and students need to understand it is not only hurtful, but it can also cause students to experience anxiety attacks or other harmful effects as well.

Tight schedules can also lead students to unhealthy outcomes. Generally, I go straight from school to practice or work and then home and immediately start my homework.

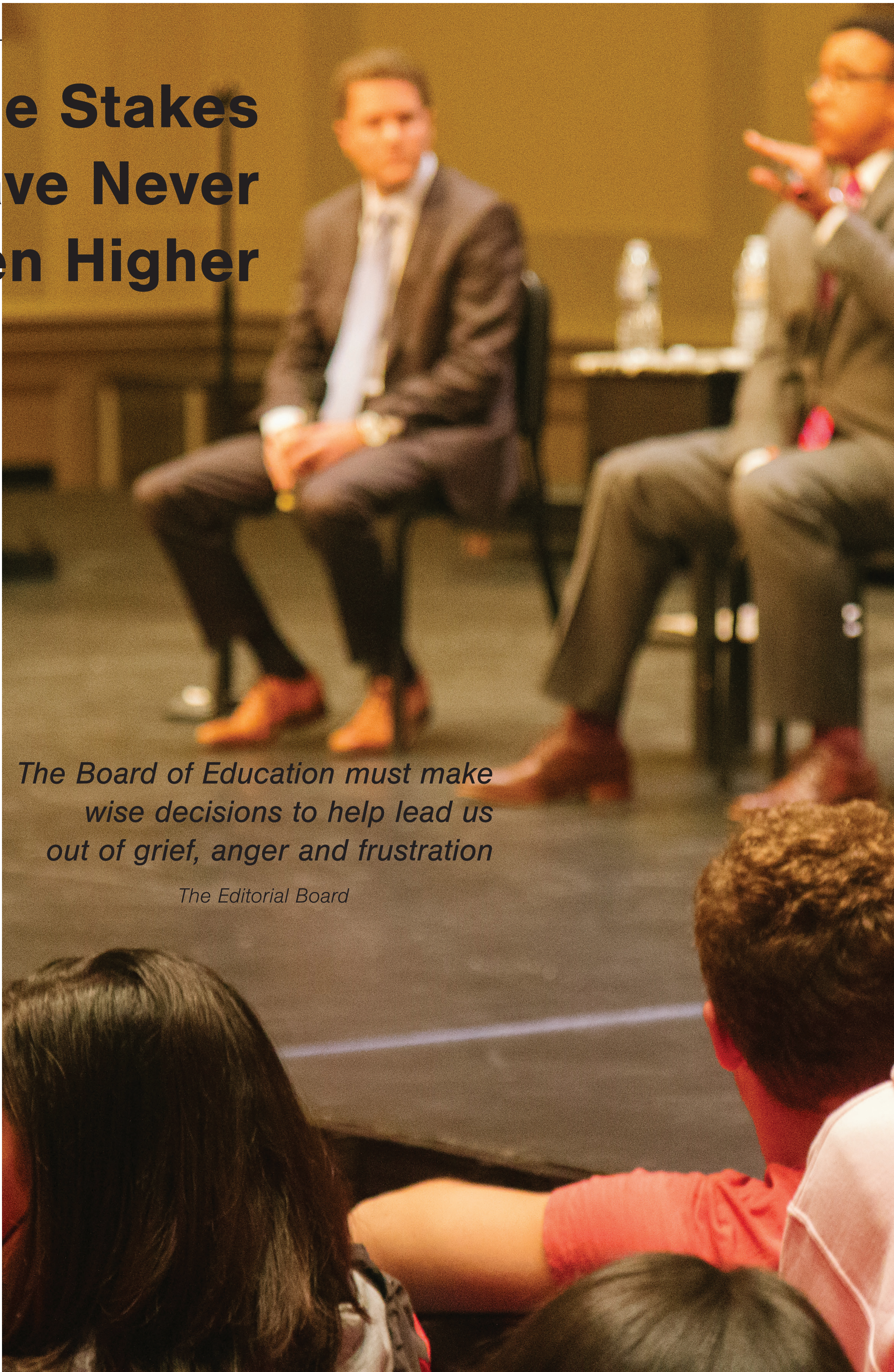
This schedule often pushes me over the edge because I often don't get time to myself for five days straight. However, only students can fix this problem.

One of my cross-country captains reminds me to take at least 15 minutes for myself daily. Since I began doing so, I have felt happier and healthier.

To battle this epidemic, mental illness must be taken seriously by students, parents and schools. All parties must help students improve their mental health. We must lessen stigma and change our schoool culture. We need a viable effort from everyone.

If we don't, the situation will only grow worse.

The Stakes Have Never Been Higher



The Board of Education must make wise decisions to help lead us out of grief, anger and frustration

The Editorial Board

ENOUGH IS ENOUGH

The past six months in Shaker have seen tragedy and disarray.

On July 10, Fernway's roof caught on fire from a repair job gone wrong, damaging both the school and the spirit of its past and present students. Teachers and students were forced to relocate to Boulevard, Onaway and Woodbury schools for an indefinite length of time.

At an Oct. 9 Board of Education meeting, a cheerleader and her mother came forward to allege bullying directed at the daughter by the team's assistant coach. She claimed the coach made comments concerning her weight and made her feel unwelcome on the team. Two days later, the district released a statement informing community members that both cheerleading coaches had resigned.

On Oct. 10, English teacher Jody Podl was put on administrative leave for allegedly violating the discrimination and harassment, intimidation and bullying policies of the district. Her leave was lifted a month later on Nov. 7 after she was given a reprimand by the district for harassment and bullying. Throughout the investigation, the community and her students were left in the dark about the reason for Podl's leave.

On Oct. 23, head coach Jarvis Gibson was put on administrative after a volunteer assistant coach previously employed by the district was found to be a felon. Three days later, Gibson resigned.

On Nov. 1, Principal Jonathan Kuehnle was also put on administrative leave. The investigation of his actions is yet to conclude, and the administration has yet to comment on the nature of his leave. In the meantime, former middle school Principal David Glasner has taken over as substitute principal.

On Nov. 7, John Morris, head of the Shaker Heights Teachers' Association, published a letter alleging the district had mishandled Podl's investigation. He said Kuehnle and Dr. Terri Breeden, assistant superintendent, who led the harassment and bullying investigation, failed to give Podl due process before disciplining her. In the letter, he urged SHTA members to attend a community meeting the following evening to "ask leadership why we are treating our teachers this way."

Students in the audience listen to Glasner and Wilkins speak at the Nov. 8 meeting. **Photo by David Vahey**

Within the first five minutes, that Nov. 8 meeting devolved into chaos. Glasner, Interim Superintendent StephenWilkins and Scott Stephens, executive director of communications, lost control of the situation after community members and students felt their concerns weren't being addressed. People yelled questions and accusations at the three men on the Large Auditorium stage.

On Nov. 17, admired Woodbury teacher Aisha Fraser was murdered by her ex-husband, Lance Mason. He went to jail in 2014 for brutally assaulting her. The community was devastated by the loss and held a candlelight vigil in her honor two days later.

On Nov. 30, the SHTA released a statement announcing they would be entering into arbitration with the high school administration "based on a lack of due process for high school English teacher, Jody Podl." This means the SHTA and the district were unable to reach an agreement about its actions in her case and are hiring a third-party to rule on the grievance.

The rapid sequence of events has exhausted us all.

The past half-year has been a tough one for Shaker. We are still mourning the death of Fraser. Teachers are demoralized, parents are frustrated, administration is frantic — and students?

Students are all three.

And we have a right to be. Students who feel that they are being discriminated against, and who receive no acknowledgement of those feelings, have a right to be angry. Students who watched their school burn in July should be upset about it. Students overhearing the defeated tone of their teachers are allowed to share in their dejection.

Shaker received an apology from the Board, and it was needed. What we need more, however, is leadership.

These feelings are normal; if we did not feel them, we would not be human – we would not be Shaker.

But we don't want to feel like this forever. Unfortunately, the disjointed administration left behind by former Superintendent Gregory C. Hutchings, Jr. suffers a leadership deficiency; we have an interim superintendent and a substitute principal.

Wilkins assumed his position after Hutchings cut short his superintendency last year by announcing he had accepted the top job at Alexandria City Public Schools in Virginia. Glasner's appointment to principal after Kuehnle's change in status was even more abrupt. One could argue that these men have not had enough time to master their roles. Regardless, they aren't yet showing the leadership these circumstances demand, and the clock is ticking.

Shaker needs leaders who display empathy, who put the needs of the community before their own ambitions and egos. We need people in power who listen to students, teachers and parents — not just one group at the expense of the others. Most of all, these attributes must be accompanied by action.

Calling a community meeting following Kuehnle's departure was important. But the lack of leadership ensured that this meeting would fall apart. Even with the superintendent and the high school principal at the front of the room, the 900 people who attended went

David Vahey

away feeling uninformed and uncertain of the district's direction and well-being. By refusing to step up, relate facts and offer an apology, the administration ensured that no one was put at ease, no one felt their questions had been answered.

In a Nov. 13 letter to the community, Wilkins apologized to Podl and to "the impacted students and their families." He said he was reviewing the performances of Kuehnle and Breeden regarding the Podl investigation. "Our work is to prepare young people for the future both intellectually and emotionally. Let's all pledge to learn from this, to get better, and to deliver what we promise—excellence, equity and exploration for all," Wilkins continued.

But in nevertheless pursuing arbitration with the SHTA and neglecting to rebuild relationships with students, staff and community, district leaders have shown that they do not see these unsettling events as the rest of us do: as opportunities for growth.

After so many months of damaging events and actions, long-term healing is imperative. Wilkins' and Glasner's roles as leaders are temporary. As such, it's not clear that they are capable of providing the support we need.

This responsibility rests with the Board of Education.

The most important task facing this board is selecting a new superintendent. Hiring a candidate who cares about and understands Shaker is essential. The board must make a concerted effort to account for the wishes of everyone in the community and not just blindly obey the advice of a search firm.

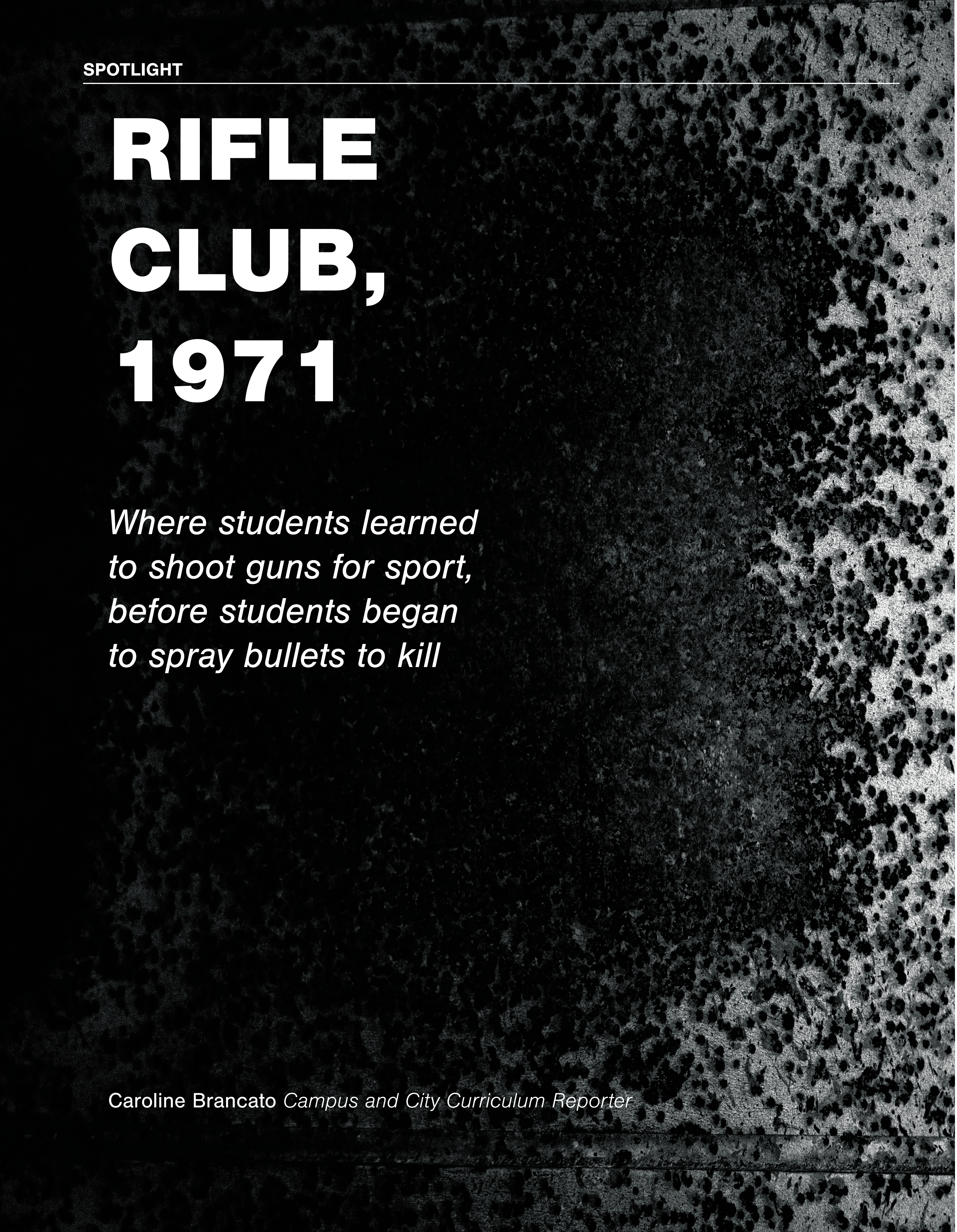
The last principal search divided the district; parents backed Kuehnle, teachers backed then-Interim Principal James Reed, and students divided themselves along those lines.

The coming search cannot be more of the same. It must be the first priority of the board to select a principal and superintendent we can all rally around, one who amplifies our voices. The candidates should be willing to humanely confront the sober issues that have arisen.

The district proudly produces leaders. But we cannot learn how to lead if district leaders shun the attributes and behaviors they hope to instill in us. So, as should always be the case in a school district, think about the students.

And show them how to lead.

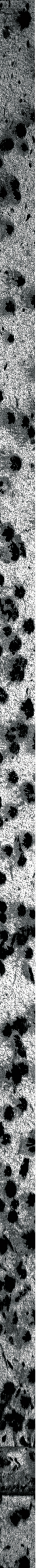
Read the annotated transcript of the Nov. 8 meeting at shakerite.com



RIFLE CLUB, 1971

Where students learned to shoot guns for sport, before students began to spray bullets to kill

Caroline Brancato *Campus and City Curriculum Reporter*



In the basement of the high school, hidden beneath years of storage, lie the remnants of another time -- one so far removed from today that it is nearly inconceivable.

They lie beyond a hallway of chain link fence that shields you from the tools and machinery stored behind it. Past it, an entrance — a heavy metal door, unlocked with a hidden key.

Upon entering, you notice only hints of what these remains once were.

The school's past is stored away in the corners of the room, hiding its abandoned purpose. A list of rules remains taped to a storage cabinet. One rule advises, "Never point a gun at anything you are not willing to destroy."

Bullet holes punctuate the walls and ceiling.

A faded chalkboard offers defining evidence: You are in what was once the home of Shaker's Rifle Club.

In a time when mass shootings in American public schools are so common that they blur together, how ironic that perhaps the safest place to hide from a shooter in Shaker Heights High School is the abandoned shooting range where students fired weapons for skill and sport.

The shooting range comprised eight, 50-foot lanes leading to eight targets attached to pulley systems. Behind the targets were bags of sand, and beyond them, a steel wall. Most shooters first learned to shoot in the prone shooting position, lying chest-down on mats. Once they gained experience, students could also learn to shoot while standing or kneeling

The Rifle Club began in the 1920s, when the high school was built, and lasted until 1987. It was a place for students to find comradery, learn to shoot and compete with one another, according to physical education and health teacher John Schwartz. He remembers taking Boy Scouts to the school's indoor shooting range before it closed.

Riflery was a club sport at Shaker, like rugby or fencing today, and members of the Rifle Club competed against such clubs at other schools. There were three categories of competition: solefire, rapidfire and timed fire. For each category, competitors had 10 shots to hit 10 small targets. The 10- to 15-person Shaker team hosted visiting schools in the basement rifle range for competition, or they carpooled to compete at another school's range.

Students stood while shooting in the solefire event. Shooters had as much time as they needed to reload their guns after each shot, usually taking three to five minutes to shoot all 10 bullets. Rapidfire was almost always shot prone; shooters would load two five-bullet magazines into their rifles and shoot as quickly and accurately as they could. In timed fire, competitors shot in any of the three positions. They had one minute to shoot 10 bullets. According to former Rifle Club adviser Gary Johnston, the most common event was solefire.

Once everyone finished, the scores from the targets were counted. The highest score would win for each event. Sometimes, a team score was also compiled. Still hanging from the Rifle Club scoreboard is Johnston's score sheet denoting a score of 87 out of a possible 100 points. Johnston was the last adviser of the club, which disbanded when he left to become a lieutenant in the Shaker Heights Police Department.

No one wanted to fill his place as adviser, and Shaker students were becoming disinterested in the club and range. Eventually, the school turned the range into an athletic equipment storage room. The room now houses trophies, uniforms, old health class equipment, varsity letters, bikes and crutches.

To create athletic storage, the range had to be dismantled. This process was difficult because the sand behind the targets was contaminated with lead from absorbing years of bullets. The sand had to be removed by wheelbarrow to the parking lot. Once it was removed, the Environmental Protection Agency had to oversee its disposal.

According to Schwartz, the room was deemed unfit to become a classroom because the concrete-coated floors and fluorescent lighting were not up to code. The 1,000-square-foot room's single entrance also poses a fire hazard.

Johnston got involved in the Rifle Club when he started working at the high school as an

The steel wall that the bullets hit is pock marked from years of use.
Photo by David Vahey

off-duty police officer at the request of Assistant Principal Albert Senft in 1971. Johnston was working in the juvenile detective bureau of the Shaker Heights Police Department at the time. Off-duty police officers who work in schools are now called student resource officers. Johnston was technically the high school's first.

Although mass shootings in schools did not occur during the 1970s, the high school was not immune to violence during the days of Rifle Club. Back then, Johnston recalled, the high school was chaotic.

During his first year in the high school, Johnston made 74 arrests for fights, assaults, trespassers, drugs, knives and handguns used by students in the school. He told stories of students from a Cleveland Heights gang called Boys About Town — BATs for short — trespassing and starting fights with Shaker students.

He relayed instances when he confiscated drugs from people. Once, he tackled a McDonald's employee outside of the Egress — then nicknamed Hippie Hall for the number of students who went there to smoke. The employee was carrying 15 ounces of marijuana with the intention of selling it to students. He tried to run away when he saw Johnston.

Johnston recounted fights, thefts and confiscations of weapons at the high school during his time there in great detail. He remembered two students who fought with razor blades and cut each other's faces. Once, Johnston and another officer cut a hole in the wall to spy on a locker thief. Another time, Johnston took a .38 caliber revolver from a student in the vice principal's office.

Johnston said he would receive tips about kids who brought guns to school from other students.

After Johnston's first year working in the high school, two more officers were added to the school patrol. This arrangement led to the current system of security guards and Student Resource Officers

THERE'S NO REASON FOR IT-
IT'S JUST OUR POLICY
Wilson
#1 IN FOOTBALL

After the rifle range was dismantled, it was designated for athletic storage and is still used for that purpose today.
Photo by David Vahey

working at the high school today.

During his time at the high school, Johnston soon got to know the Rifle Club and took over as adviser in 1976 when the previous adviser left.

Club members paid a $2 membership fee to show their commitment to the club, according to Schwartz. Most equipment costs were financed by the National Rifle Association. The first box of ammunition that each club member used was free and consisted of 50 rounds. After that, each box cost 50 cents. The money was considered a donation to the club, since it was already paid for by the NRA. Alumni and staff, however, shot for free. The money from the membership fees, ammunition donations and sale of scrap metal was used to pay for a party at the end of the year and to buy range supplies that were not donated.

Johnston said that twice a month, adults in the community could go to the school's rifle range to shoot in the Shaker Heights Adult Shooting Club. He said he participated in this club before he worked at the school, and that adults primarily shot handguns, specifically .22 caliber revolvers.

Johnston said some students choose to buy their own rifles, which, at the time, could cost up to $300. Students who owned their own guns would bring them to school and store them in their lockers during the day until they went to the range after school. The NRA also provided .22 caliber military surplus rifles that students in the club could use. Students were not permitted to shoot handguns during club activities.

The rifles kept at school for club use were dismantled properly and locked away in cabinets in the rifle range when not in use.

Both Johnston and Schwartz stressed that the club was very safe and its rules well enforced. Taped to the cabinet where the guns were stored was a long list of safety precautions. Club guidelines in-

A Rifle Club member shoots a rifle for a Gristmill photo dated 1974. **Photo by David Vahey**

cluded the proper way to store and handle guns. An adviser had to be present at the range when students were shooting, and students had to wear ear protection, eye protection and a vest when shooting.

According to Johnston, there are four fundamental rules of gun safety: Guns are always loaded and must be treated as such; never let the muzzle of the gun point to something that should not be destroyed; keep fingers away from the trigger and trigger guard; and always be sure of the target and what is behind it.

The club members were a very responsible group of kids, according to Schwartz. They respected the instructors and equipment, and they followed all safety procedures. Johnston said they really wanted to be involved and be safe, and he continually encouraged safety. "Good habits are hard to break, and bad habits are hard to break," he said, "so we always encouraged good habits."

Sometimes, however, students would get distracted. "They knew what to do, but they'd get talking and having fun and laughing," Johnston said. Sometimes he would have to give reminders, like keeping the muzzle of the gun pointed in the air.

Neither Johnston, nor Schwartz nor the community ever worried about dangerous incidents such as school shootings happening because of the club, its weapons or members. In fact, the club was supported by the community.

"By and large at that time, and we're talking, you know, 40 years, 35 years ago, we had a lot of conservative people in Shaker Heights, and a lot of former military people, and they were all in favor of the Rifle Club," Johnston said. Club members came from families with hunting or military backgrounds, and some enlisted in the military or became police officers themselves as adults.

"There wasn't the paranoia there is today."

John Schwartz,
PE teacher

"In World War II, the majority of the people that were drafted or joined the military had experience with firearms already, and that made it far easier for various branches of the military to train them," Johnston said.

Schwartz said the community thought the club was great because some residents had been members. "There wasn't the paranoia there is today," he said.

Part of that paranoia comes from the drastic increase in school shootings within the past two decades. According to the Washington Post, more than 215,000 students in America have experienced gun violence at their school since the 1999 Columbine shooting.

Sophomore Esti Goldstein said she would be uncomfortable if a Rifle Club existed at the high school today. "I would definitely feel very unsafe, considering what's going on with America right now," she said. Goldstein said that the increase in school shootings and the way that guns have changed inform her feeling.

School and other mass shooters have used semi-automatic weaspons including and similar

to an AR-15, a lightweight military-style weapon easily modified to shoot more bullets more quickly. Citizens are able to purchase these weapons with limited background checks, and there are no restrictions for legal use. The student who killed 17 people at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida Feb. 14 used an AR-15, and that weapon has been used in 11 mass shootings since 2012, according to Stanford University and USA Today.

These mass murders have left Goldstein apprehensive, and if the Rifle Club existed today, she would not be surprised if a school shooting happened because of it. "I think under the pretense of going to gun club, people could come in and say, 'This is my gun for gun club,' and then we'd have a school shooting on our hands," she said.

Johnston understands Goldstein's views, and he said many people agree with her opinion on not using guns as part of school curriculum, especially in light of school shootings over the past two decades. "It's, to me, a shame, but that's unfortunately the way that society has evolved for a variety of reasons," Johnston said.

With the increase of school shootings and change of political climate, the gun control debate has escalated. High school students, including those from Shaker, have taken action.

Students participated in The March For Our Lives last spring to protest gun violence and advocate common sense gun laws. The march occurred March 24 in Washington D.C. with sister marches occurring across the country, including in Cleveland.

Shaker students also participated in a blackout and two walkouts. One was in support of the victims of the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School shooting. During the first walkout on March 14, students gathered on the turf for 17 minutes of silence, one for each victim of the shooting.

The 1972 Rifle Club brandishes weapons for its Gristmill photo. **Photo by David Vahey**

A month later, students participated in a walkout on the anniversary of the Columbine shooting, April 20, to protest the lack of gun control laws in addition to honoring victims. Students marched around the oval and participated in an open mic discussion from third to fifth period.

Johnston said something needs to be done about school shootings, but he advocates for mental health resources over banning guns.

"I would not support any ban because, out of the some 300 million AR-15 type rifles, for example, that are in the country legally and owned by various people, we are seeing less than one tenth of one percent — I don't even know if its that big — of misuse of these weapons," Johnston said.

He believes the issue is less about guns and more about the people using them. "I really think what we need to do is bring back the mental health network that we had up until about 1970, when the government closed all these facilities," Johnston said.

These mental health facilities were hospitals that housed and cared for mentally ill people who were a danger to themselves or society. They were usually placed in the facilities by their families or by court order.

Johnston said when the facilities were defunded by the government, they left many people on the streets without the proper care. Johnston said this lack of support leads to violence such as mass shootings.

Johnston would also advocate for a few qualified people or police officers armed in the school to stop school shooters. The student resource officers currently in the school are not armed. He said it would also serve the purpose of building community relations between the students and the police department.

According to Johnston, in the 1970s and '80s, the SHPD had a stronger relationship with the community and held an annual parade in which police officers marched and displayed their police cars, SWAT vehicles and gear.

The police officers who worked in the school also knew many of the students and were in touch with the community because many of them had grown up in Shaker. "It was a tighter-knit community overall back then," Johnston said.

In recent years, community relations with police across the country have become tense due to increasing evidence of police brutality, which has sparked the #BlackLivesMatter movement. The activist effort seeks justice for African-American people who have been unjustly killed by police. In 2017, 987 people of all races were fatally shot by police, according to The Washington Post. Johnston said he does not remember community tension with the police during his time in the police department.

Listen to a conversation with the reporter who wrote this story in our podcast, The Shake.

When Johnston retired from the police department in 1992 as lieutenant, he had been head of the department's SWAT team for the last 15 years of his career. He and his wife moved to Colorado, his home state. In retirement, he does volunteer work, drug education and writes for several magazines. Johnston is also a published author of three books. One, "The World's Assault Rifles," published in 2010, is 1,200 pages long and weighs nine pounds.

Johnston said the book is used by the FBI and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives as a reference. The book is being updated and is no longer in print but is selling for more than $350 at amazon.com.

Although Johnston is busy in retirement, he looks fondly back at his time in Shaker working in the high school and with the club. "A lot of good times," he said. "We had a lot of fun there, and a lot of good people we knew at the high school."

Times have changed and so have the community's views on guns. The National Rifle Association now suffers withering criticism. What was once a tool used for sport has become a killing machine people fear. Johnson is unsure what the community would think if the Rifle Club were still active -— if it would cause community backlash or change the way Shaker views guns. He said, "I've been away from Shaker for 26 years and a lot changes. I really don't know."

Paying More Than You Think

Feeding fashion habits may be cheap, but are moral costs worth it?

Ana Butze *Spotlight Editor*

Juliet Tonkin *Journalism I Reporter*

Everyone wants to look good, but no one wants to spend a fortune.

So, among students, shopping at discounted retailers, such as Forever 21, H&M and Pacsun, is common. In 2017, H&M, the world's second-largest apparel company, made more than $25 billion in sales. H&M is known for selling inexpensive fast fashion — clothes that cheaply reflect designers' current fashion collections.

"Cheap stuff isn't always bad. Like, H&M is pretty cheap and is usually good quality," said junior Lukas Zarders, who prefers cheaper brands over more expensive brands.

On H&M's website, camisole tops cost only $2.99, and turtleneck tops cost $5.99. Jeans and knit sweaters sell for $9.99. H&M also sells sweatshirts for as low as $25. The most expensive item is a leather coat that costs $499. Other expensive items on the website are leather jackets that cost $399.

So, why are so many H&M items so cheap? One reason is because H&M uses a lot of cheap labor. The company's clothes are made in Bangladesh, Cambodia, China and Bulgaria, among other countries. According to salon.com, Cambodian women will sew clothing for roughly 50 cents per hour pay.

In 2013, a garment factory in Dhaka, Bangladesh collapsed, killing more than 1,000 workers. **Photo by rijans via Wikimedia Commons**

That's right, 50 cents per hour.

In addition, roughly 90 percent of Cambodia's seamstresses are women. If they get pregnant, they're often fired.

The workers who toil for our cheap clothes sometimes pay for them with their lives. On April 24, 2013, workers began a normal day by reporting to work in Rana Plaza in Bangladesh's Dhaka District. That day, the Savar building, located in Rana Plaza, crumbled while the workers were inside. It now holds the horrific distinction of being the site of the deadliest garment factory disaster ever. More than 1,100 people died during the collapse, and thousands more were injured.

Primark, an Irish clothing and accessories retailer, was among the few companies to admit to having done business with the factory that collapsed. Other major fashion brands are suspected to have been involved in using the factory to create their merchandise. Companies refused comment when asked if the building had been a part of their supply chain.

"It was like four or five years ago, so I don't really remember, but many people died," Bangladeshi exchange student Ridaka Jannah said. "So many people went to the hospital, and they donated their blood for the people who needed blood. Many people helped them."

A lawsuit against three U.S. retailers sourcing clothes from the factory — J.C. Penney, the Children's Place and Walmart — was dismissed by a judge because it was filed past the one-year statute of limitations under Bangladeshi law. The judge also ruled that because the factory workers were not directly hired by the companies, they were not responsible for their working conditions.

The workers who survived the collapse had been telling their managers about their concerns about the cracks they had seen in the walls in the days leading up to the incident. Bangladesh has since charged 38 people with murder over this disaster, according to Time.

Seven months later, on Nov. 25, 2013, H&M vowed to pay what the company calls a "fair living wage" to the garment workers in its supply chain by 2018.

Five years later, and that change has still not occurred. "The people that work in the factories, they are the most underprivileged people. Most of them are from the villages, so they don't get to study. They're basically illiterate, so they just find a source to earn money," Jannah said.

She continued, "They go to the factories because they can find a job there very easily because they have a lot of them. They work 18 hours a day and they still don't get paid well."

But do students know the conditions of the workers who make the clothes they buy?

The common answer is no.

Junior Quinn Scanlon thinks society has gotten used to shopping online. "You don't really think about the repercussions of it, or what people went through to get it there and get it in stores," Scanlon said.

Sophomore Cooper Cook doesn't think about corporate behavior before he buys something, but said that he might if he hears something about it.

"I just look at the shoe, and it just looks cool, so I don't think about who made it. I just think about how much it is," sophomore Daniel Spector said.

Junior Sophia Stein said that she does consider the treatment of workers before buying clothes. "I watched a documentary when I was younger that talked about it, and ever since I've been very passionate about the topic. Since I got an exchange student from Bangladesh, and I've heard more

Senior Camille Lamb poses in the Learning Garden. She prefers thrift stores to retail outlets.
Photo by David Vahey

about the workers there, it's become more real to me after hearing it from someone who's seen it themselves," said Stein, whose family is hosting Jannah.

Senior Wendy Ye looks at the brand of the product and where it was made. She said that knowing how a brand treats its workers has some effect on her decision about whether to purchase a product. "If I really, really like the clothes, I might buy it, but usually not," if they were produced by a company that maintains notably harsh working conditions.

H&M is not the only company to face allegations of exploiting workers.

Nike, the largest apparel company in the world, has also been known to mistreat its workers.

Eighty percent of Vietnamese Nike workers are female, and some are illegally forced to work more than the legal working week of 48 hours. In 1997, a Nike shoe plant in Vietnam was accused of exposing workers to an illegal amount of carcinogens, which can cause cancer. Seventy-seven percent of workers experienced respiratory problems, according to The New York Times.

In September, Nike was called out again for long days and low wages for factory workers.

At the same time, Nike is one of the most politically active popular brands today. Nike has sold 61 percent more merchandise since releasing a controversial ad featuring former National Football League quarterback Colin Kaepernick.

Kaepernick has not played in the NFL since opting out of his contract with the San Francisco 49ers in 2017. This followed a season in which he was both praised and criticized for taking a knee during the National Anthem to protest racial injustice and police brutality.

SHTA
Shaker HeightsTeachers' Association
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The Nike campaign features Kaepernick, Lebron James, Serena Williams and Odell Beckham, Jr. Public reactions have ranged from praise to Twitter videos in which angry people cut the Nike swoosh from their socks.

Soon after the release of the Kaepernick ad, President Trump took to Twitter. "Just like the NFL, whose ratings have gone WAY DOWN, Nike is getting absolutely killed with anger and boycotts. I wonder if they had any idea that it would be this way? As far as the NFL is concerned, I just find it hard to watch, and always will, until they stand for the flag," he wrote.

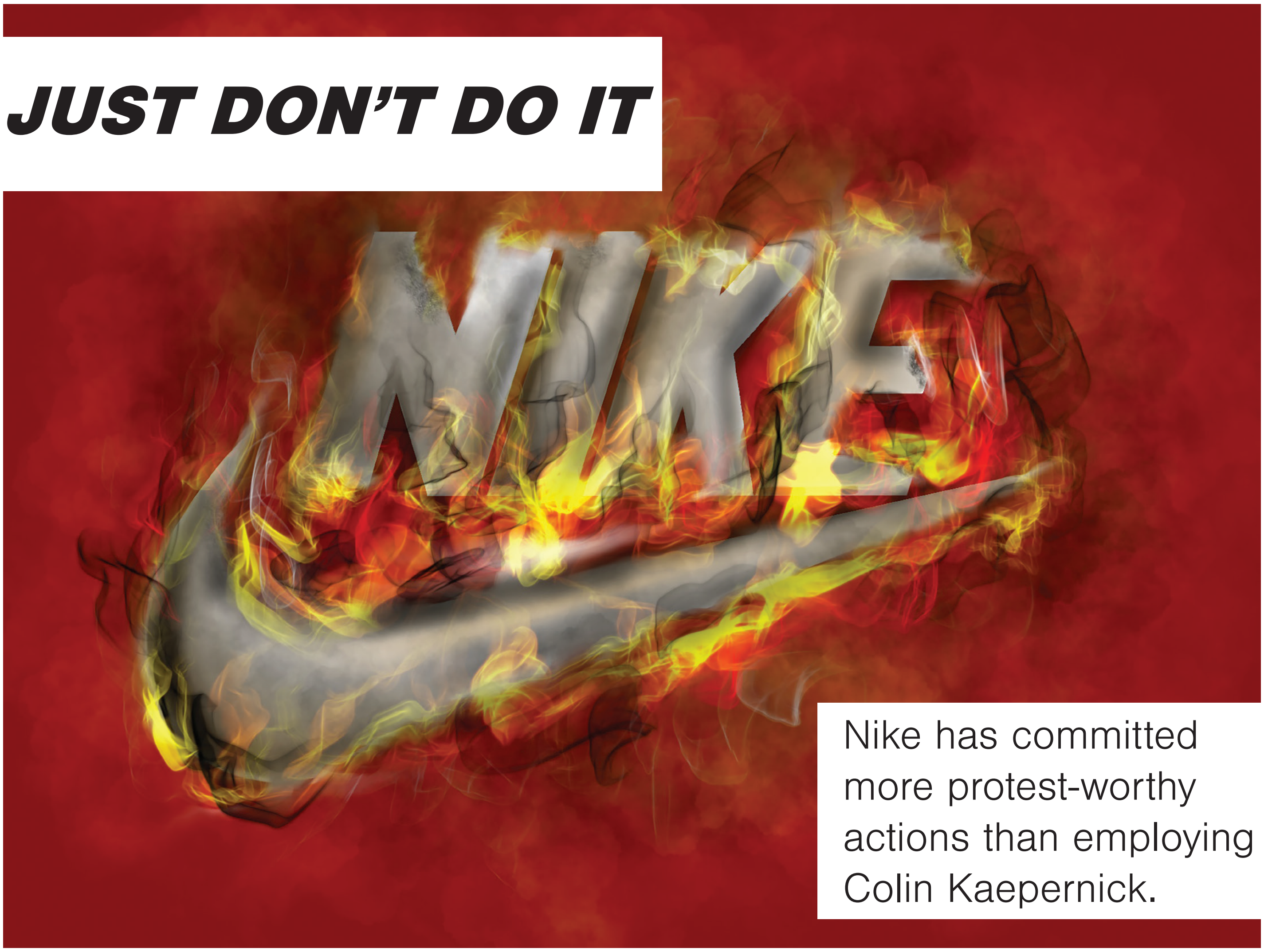
With Kaepernick trying to raise awareness about inhumane treatment of African-Americans in the eyes of the law, is it hypocritical for him to work with a company that allows workers to be mistreated in overseas factories?

"Kaepernick's thing is fighting for equality, and that's not equality if you're putting people through harsh conditions. You're profiting off of them so much. It's not fair," Spector said.

Sophomore Mitchell Stiefel agreed."You can't come out with an ad about discrimination if you don't follow your own example," he said.

GoodGuide is a website dedicated to providing consumers with more information about the environmental and societal impact of the products they buy. The site ranks companies on a scale of one to 10 (10 being the best and one being the worst). Twenty common brands students wear score less than a five on the GoodGuide scale. These include Abercrombie and Fitch, Aeropostale, American Eagle, Anthropologie,

JUST DON'T DO IT



Nike has committed more protest-worthy actions than employing Colin Kaepernick.

Bebe, Diesel, Forever 21, Free People, Guess, Hollister, J. Crew, Kohls, Loft, Lucky, Madewell, Quicksilver, Roxy, Topshop, Urban Outfitters and White House Black Market.

To send a message to such companies, people find a way to avoid buying their products. Senior Camille Lamb prefers shopping at vintage stores, which is a cheaper and more ethical way to buy clothes. Junior Lailah Perry likes to shop at thrift stores, such as Avalon Exchange and Plato's Closet. Thrift store shopping saves money and reduces your carbon footprint.

The Environmental Club has recognized how the fast fashion industry affects workers, their families, and the world. Science teacher Maggie Parks, the club adviser, worked with students to put together a school clothing swap in an effort to reduce unethical consumption. Students brought in clothes and exchanged them for items others brought to the swap.

The Environmental Club would like to continue this effort by organizing a clothing swap this winter. Students will receive tickets when they bring in items that they can exchange for other pieces the day of the exchange.

A louder way to communicate disapproval of a corporation's labor practices is by organizing a boycott.

"I think that it would be a good start, but to get everybody around the world to boycott would be a big challenge," junior Reese Pulver said.

Clothing choice has long been a way to express individual identity.

A person of means can choose to wear expensive clothes to express their wealth. A fan of a sports team can wear a team's jersey to express their support for that team. A supporter of a political candidate can wear clothes featuring their candidate's slogans to express solidarity with that person.

BAILEY PASTERNAK, *SOCIAL ISSUES COLUMNIST*

Today, what you wear — or don't — has also become a way to question someone's ethics.

Consumers judge corporations on their environmental policy, corporate ethics, their mission and in some cases who they employ. Common issues that prompt protests of companies include the use of animal testing and products, poor working conditions of factory workers in foreign countries, low pay and environmental misdeeds.

In the beginning of September, Nike made a controversial decision when they decided to feature former San Francisco 49er starting quarterback Colin Kaepernick in their most recent marketing campaign. Kaepernick sparked a national debate, when in protest of police brutality against African-Americans, he decided to kneel during the national anthem.

Kaepernick was not protesting the United States of America or the armed services, but a societal inequality: Police officers kill African-Americans at a rate far higher than any other group. Kaepernick became a polarizing figure. He became a hero to many, but also was vilified by those who perceived his actions as unpatriotic. Ultimately, his actions lead the 49ers to cut him, and he has yet to be hired by another NFL team.

The debate about whether Kaepernick had the right to protest while at work misses the point. Instead of addressing the core of Kaepernick's concerns, most people focused on his delivery. Kaepernick's protest was a missed opportunity. He protested racial inequality that plagues our country; that is the core concern.

Because Kaepernick is so controversial, the Nike campaign received a great deal of media attention. In Nike's eyes, it was mission accomplished. Some loved Nike's embrace of Kaepernick. ;Others, not so much. Among the anti-Kaepernick crowd, it became a trend to boycott Nike products and cut the Nike swoosh off of products they already owned. But it is an ad campaign, nothing more, nothing less. It does not tell us whether Nike is a good corporate citizen.

Boycotting Nike products or cutting off the swoosh because of Colin Kaepernick is an overreaction. Nike is using Kaepernick to sell their products. If it turns out that Nike was pledging all profits to fund programs to address racial inequalities, then that should surely spark enthusiasm to buy the swoosh — or not to. Simply using Kaepernick in an ad should not raise anyone's blood pressure.

Nike has a history of outsourcing production of their shoes and clothes. In 2013, Nike was accused of underpaying employees from Indonesia.

According to The Huffington Post, Nike factories in Indonesia applied for an exemption to the minimum wage law. To do this, the factory employees would have to consent to the wage decrease. In a factory located in Sukabumi, Indonesia, Nike was accused of contracting Indonesian military officials to force factory workers to agree to the wage decrease.

According to the BBC, from 2010 to 2012, Nike subjected Indonesian factory workers in Serang, Banten to 600,000 hours of unpaid overtime. After a lawsuit brought by Serikat Pekerja Nasional, the national labor union, Nike agreed to pay $1 million in compensation to 4,500 employees.

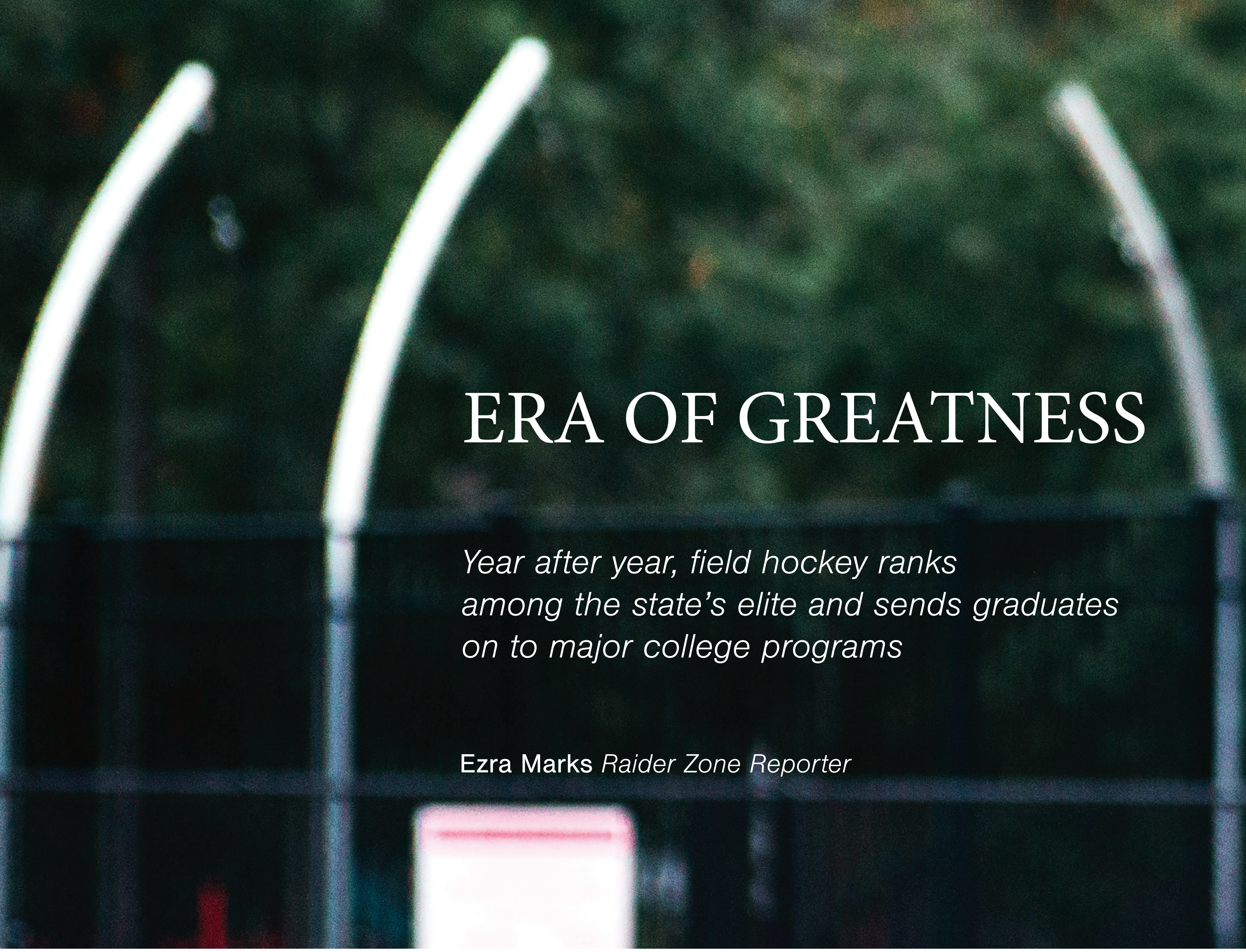
The company's involvement in these scandals is a sound reason to protest Nike. Why is it OK to protest corporate policy and practice and not protest an ad spokesman? Because one event involved an ad campaign featuring a single representative of the company, and the other involved corporate policy.

Because Nike is using Kaepernick for marketing purposes, a Nike protest does not make sense. The fact that Nike hired him tells us little about Nike's view of race in America.

Nike hired Kaepernick to increase its profits. The company's decision had nothing to do with racial injustice. Nike knew they would receive a lot of attention after hiring him. A Time.com article declared that in less than a day after releasing the first ad in the Kaepernick campaign, "Nike received more than $43 million worth of media exposure."

Sometimes it's hard to say if a company merits protesting, but I think this situation is clear: Boycotting Nike for employing Kaepernick makes no sense.

If you feel strongly, however, and must dispose of your vintage size 9.5 Air Jordans, I will take them.



ERA OF GREATNESS

Year after year, field hockey ranks among the state's elite and sends graduates on to major college programs

Ezra Marks *Raider Zone Reporter*

Work hard and show grit.

That is the motto of the field hockey team. And with it, over the past decade, the Raiders have become a state powerhouse.

The program was not always as successful. "When we first started nine to 10 years ago, we were not great," coach Jenifer Clarke said. "It took a long time. Hilary [Anderson], my sister, laid the foundation of the program, and I continued it."

In 2014, Shaker won the field hockey state championship for the first time since 1991."Compared to now, the culture was different, because it was a more of a come, be friends and have fun environment," Clarke said. "It was more easy going. We changed the culture when Coach Anderson and I took over. It was a low time I had here, because when you change the culture somewhere, it takes a lot of adjusting, especially for the students."

In any athletic program, high school or professional, people judge the athletes and coaches by their records. Coaches who struggle to win games are usually fired. For a new coach and her team, the process of changing a program's identity can be tough. Success does not come overnight.

"Kids can get angry because they're used to one culture, and you switch it as the new coach. It's hard to put yourself out there as a coach for people to be angry and not agree with what you're doing," Clarke said. "In the end, believing that what you're doing is right and best for the program."

Junior Reese Pulver hits a field hockey ball into the air as she warms up for a home game. **Photo by David Vahey**

"Everyone can have talent, but it is what you do with the talent that separates the great from the good," she said. "Even if there is one player who has talent, when it comes to hard work and effort, we cater it to the whole team. Our girls believe we are one of the hardest-working teams at Shaker."

Junior Ava Yacovone has been on the varsity field hockey team since freshman year. "I would define hard work as always having a positive attitude, grit and confidence," she said. "When you do something with confidence, you force yourself to get better."

> **"Our girls believe we are one of the hardest working teams at Shaker."**
>
> Jennifer Clarke, varsity field hockey coach

In the offseason, Clarke and Anderson lead workouts that comprise heavy running and lifting. The workouts are scheduled almost every day over the summer.

"These workouts push you to points you did not believe your body could reach, and everyone feels successful after," junior Reese Pulver said. "After track workouts, I feel accomplished, and by the end of preseason the difference in the team dynamic is astounding."

Preseason workouts during the summer are most difficult. "We develop our grit and toughness through the 6 a.m. workouts and practices," Clarke said. "I don't like practices in really hot weather, because it diminishes our quality of play. Our 6-9 a.m. workouts seem to drive our girls to work harder, even though it is tough."

"It's those players that play in the offseason that take their game to the next level," she said. "If you get that one player who wants to play in the offseason, their play will improve drastically."

Clarke noted four athletes from the 2014 state championship team as examples: Megan Mitchell ('16), Jessica Morford ('14), Cassidy Anderson ('14) and Lori Mack ('17). "Those are four strong, amazing girls who worked their tails off," she said.

All four currently play a Division I sport. Mitchell, now playing field hockey at American University, was the 2015 Plain Dealer field hockey player of the year. Morford, now playing at Indiana University, earned selections to all-Ohio first teams. Mack, now playing at Michigan State University, was also an all-state selection in 2017. Cassidy Anderson plays ice hockey at Northeastern. She finished her career as the leading scorer in Shaker field hockey history.

Replacing players who had such significant impact on the program is extremely hard, according to Clarke. "It's just developing a passion for the game, for the girls. You try to do it for all of them. But there's always one or two you get every other year who are special and put so much time into the sport. It's all about passion and commitment to the game,"she said.

"My freshman year, there were eight or nine seniors, which is almost the entire lineup," Yacovone said. "When they graduated, we were lucky enough to have solid players in other grades, but Coach Clarke will move people around in different positions. You might not end up where you originally thought, but I feel that she knows where people are best at, and how the team will best work together."

Coach Clarke's daughter, junior Lora Clarke ('20), is currently ranked 58th in the country for her

Field hockey coaches address their team in a huddle during a home game Oct. 23. “Even if there is one player who has talent, when it comes to hard work and effort, we cater it to the whole team,” Clarke said. **Photo by David Vahey**

Junior Stella Hubbard makes a pass in an Oct. 11 home game. Shaker’s team beat the Kent Roosevelt Rough Riders 10 to zero in this game. Hubbard scored a goal. **Photo by David Vahey**

class according to maxfieldhockey.com. She is committed to the University of Michigan to play Division I field hockey.

“When she was a freshman and went to the state finals and lost, she looked at me and said, ‘Mom, I want to play D1 field hockey.’ I said, ‘Alright. Let’s make a path and a plan,’ ” Clarke said. “That year after the finals loss, people have no idea how much work she put in. It was remarkable to witness. She put countless hours into it.”

When a strong class leaves, it usually puts the team at a disadvantage. Shaker, however, still manages to go to states year after year. Expectations for the team are usually high, but consistent state runs can raise the bar even higher. “We do a goal setting workshop at the beginning of the season every year,” Clarke said. “We all discuss states, and how we are going to get there, but every year is different. This group currently has been to states two years already. They expect to make states.”

Though Shaker has appeared in four of the last six final four rounds, the Raiders are met by stiff competition in two Columbus powerhouses -- Thomas Worthington and Columbus Academy. For 23 consecutive years, one of these two schools has made the final four.

To continue Shaker’s success, Clarke said, “The girls just have to continue to have love and passion for the game. The hard work will continue to pay off for us. We believe in each other so much year in and year out. The sky’s the limit for us.”

ARE WE HEADING FOR TROUBLE?

New information about long-term brain damage magnifies danger of concussions for athletes

Anna Krouse *Raider Zone Editor*
Photo by David Vahey

Junior Sam Votruba started playing football this season, but his mom was not happy about it.

"The risk of concussions made my mom strongly against me playing football. She is still against me playing," he said.

Concussions are caused by a blow to or extreme shaking of the head that shift the position of the brain, which causes chemical changes to the brain's environment and destruction of its cells.

Most of the time, concussions are minor injuries, and athletes bounce back after rest and proper treatment. However, if the concussion is serious, it can cause permanent brain damage in the long run or, in rare cases, death.

Concussions are most common in contact sports, such as football. But Athletic Director Don Readence said that concussions can occur in almost any sport.

Concern about playing football is rising, but based on concussion data from the high school, parents should also be concerned about daughters who play soccer.

Over the past five years, 48 athletes have brought concussions to the attention of the high school's athletic trainer, Bob Collins. Football has tallied the most with 10 concussions, but women's soccer reported nine. This data only represents concussions treated by Collins. Athletes who seek treatment from their doctors are not represented.

A study done by the National Athletic Trainers' Association found that women were 56 percent more likely than men to sustain a concussion from impact. A collision that concusses two in five men will concuss three in five women.

The study concluded that there are two reasons for this. First, women are more likely to report an injury than men are. Secondly, until women are fully mature, their neck muscles are less developed than men's. This may account for the nine reported concussions in women's soccer over the last five years, while men's soccer players only sustained five.

The Ohio High School Athletic Association added a regulation for concussions in 2013, stating "Any student, while practicing for or competing in an interscholastic contest, who exhibits signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with having sustained a concussion or head injury (such as loss of consciousness, headache, dizziness, confusion or balance problems) shall be immediately removed from the practice or contest."

Collins explained how this policy is put into practice at Shaker. "If someone complains of headaches, we have to sit them out. The big thing is, you have to interview them and find out what is going on," he said.

The urgency of injury prevention and protocol has skyrocketed as technology and medicine advance. Concussions were not recognized as a danger in the NFL until 1994.

Junior Journalism I reporter Juliet Tonkin sustained two serious concussions during her eighth grade year. While playing in a soccer game, Tonkin was hit hard in the head by the ball and was knocked out for about a minute. Her second concussion, which did not occur during a game, came just four months after her first. She said the lingering effects of her first concussion caused her to lose her balance.

"During my eighth-grade year, I wasn't in school at all, basically," Tonkin said. "For freshman year, I was on a modified schedule, so I was only taking four classes."

Tonkin said proper treatment and recovery are

"The risk of concussions made my mom strongly against me playing football."

Sam Votruba,
junior wide receiver

Shaker plays Benedictine during a Friday night game Aug. 31 at Russell H. Rupp stadium. **Photo by David Vahey**

crucial.

"After I had such adverse effects from my injury, I just decided that I shouldn't go back to soccer," Tonkin said. "It wasn't worth the risk."

Tonkin also stressed the importance of preventative measures to avoid severe consequences. In order to be eligible for a sport, incoming freshmen or junior athletes take a required baseline concussion test online. This ImPACT test shows the athlete a series of words and shapes that they must recall from memory. It also tests the athlete's speed and reactions.

After showing signs of a concussion during a game or practice, an athlete will retake the test. A score lower than the baseline value usually means they have a concussion. But the test is only as useful the baseline value is valid.

Former football Head Coach Jarvis Gibson said, "A lot of times when they take the baseline test for concussions, they just run through and don't take it seriously."

In a 2018 story, The Washington Post stated that some athletes purposely score low on baseline concussion tests so that if they become injured or concussed, their subsequent test score will resemble the baseline score -- and they will seem fit to continue playing.

"People tend to not understand the consequences of not taking the baseline test seriously. I feel that if they knew some of the things that could happen to them just in high school, maybe that would change," Tonkin said.

Nationally, similar to Shaker, football players are most prone to concussion injuries.

The Shaker football team did not experience any head injuries this season until senior running back Rasheen Ali was hit during a game against Strongsville Oct. 13.

Ali was running the ball when one of the Strongsville defenders approached. "Someone hit me from the back," Ali said.

Ali said that the impact of hitting the ground made him feel disoriented and dizzy. Senior quarterback Will Schinabeck walked Ali off the field after he had difficulty discussing the next play.

After the hit, Ali spoke with the athletic trainer at the game and retook the concussion test. He scored lower than his baseline concussion test.

Some players still want to play when they have a concussion because they do not want to let their teammates down.

"I believe the love of the game outweighs the risks. You're going to get bumps and bruises here and there; it's what you signed up for. You just have to love the game and do what you do," senior cornerback Blare Sawyer said.

When athletes on the football team officially become concussed, they required approval from a physician or licensed health care provider before returning to play.

"I believe the love of the game outweighs the risks. You're going to get bumps and bruises here and there; it's what you signed up for."

Blare Sawyer
senior cornerback

In accordance with OHSAA protocol, coaches must spend the first few days of the season teaching players how to tackle properly -- and how to absorb a tackle. Gibson wants to make sure his players are safe on the field, so working on basics is vital. Raider athletes don't hit each other directly during practice to further prevent injuries. "We work on form tackling and not aiming for the head," Sawyer said.

"The number one rule is see who you hit," Gibson said. "The first thing people think to do when someone is coming at them is to put their head down. They think that the helmet is gonna protect them, not realizing that their head will absorb the force."

This may be why no concussions from rugby were reported to the high schools' athletic trainer. Rugby requires a different tackling style, in which players lead the impact with their shoulders rather than their heads. Now, college and high school football teams have started to teach the rugby style to prevent injury. According to Gibson, Shaker does not yet teach the rugby tackle.

Although Shaker's experience with concussions in football has not been drastic, this is not always the case for players across the nation.

On Sept. 30, Dylan Thomas, a 16-year-old linebacker from Pike County High School in Georgia, went into cardiac arrest and died due to a brain injury. Just two days before, Thomas took a direct hit to his head during the third quarter of a game. Scientists concluded that his death was caused by a traumatic brain injury.

Thomas's injury was extremely rare. According to NBC News, doctors at Grady Memorial Hospital, where Thomas was being treated, explained that his injury required "the perfect amount of pressure on the perfect spot at the perfect angle."

A more common threat to athletes is Chronic Traumatic Encephalopathy. This progressive degenerative brain disease was discovered 16 years ago and is similar to senile dementia or Alzheimer's.

According to the Concussion Foundation, CTE forms when a protein called tau forms clumps that spread, slowly killing brain cells. It is impossible to know how many high school players will develop Chronic Traumatic Encephalopathy at this time because the illness is only diagnosed after death.

The earliest symptoms of CTE can begin in one's early 30s or 40s, after players retire from playing football in either high school, college or the NFL. These symptoms include depression, memory loss and trouble focusing. The symptoms become more severe with age.

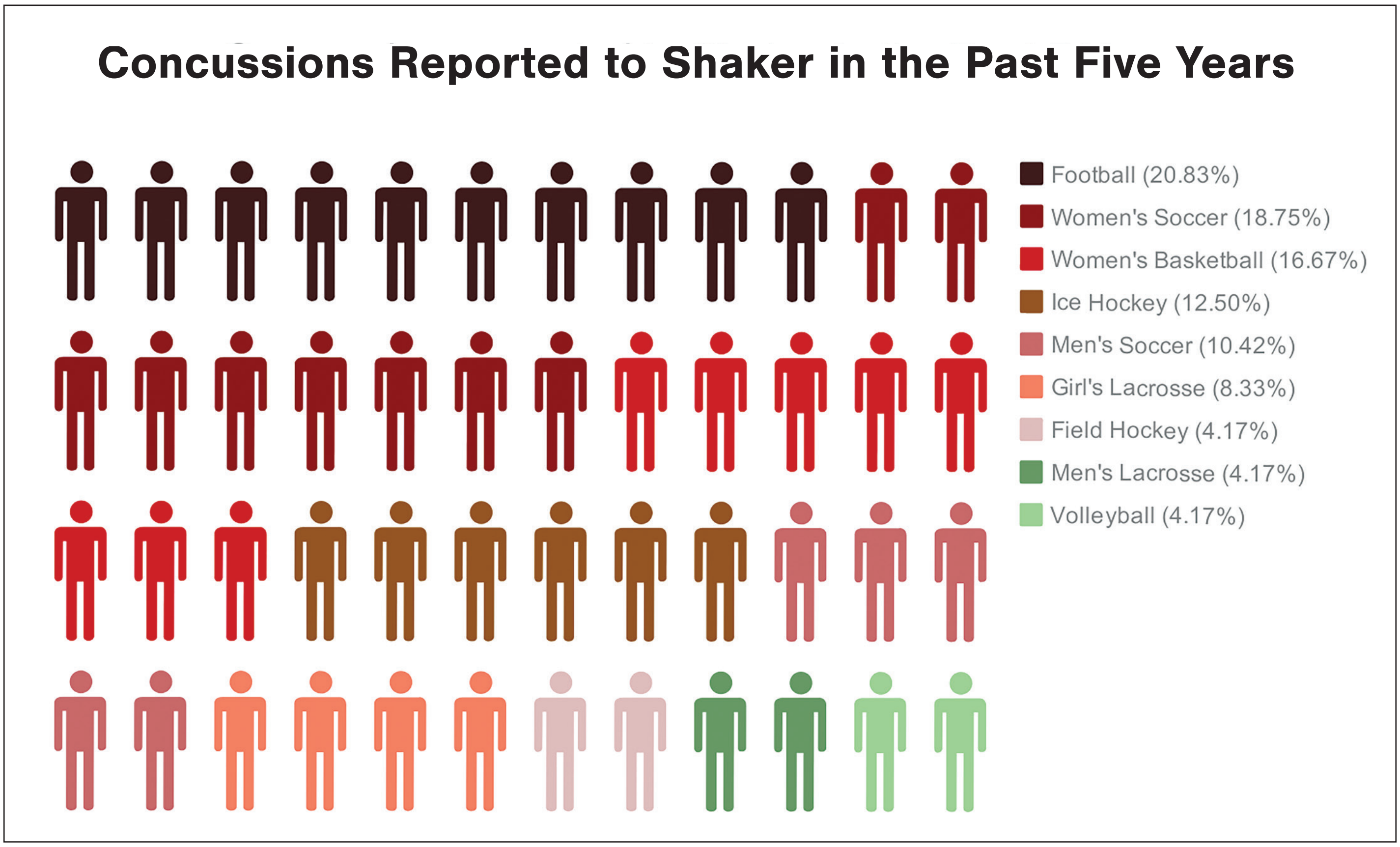
The Journal of the American Medical Association published a study of 202 brains of American football players donated after death for research on CTE. Out of these brains, 177 — 87 percent — of them showed evidence of the disease.

More than half of the brains examined for the study came from NFL players. When diving further into the study, doctors found that 99 percent of the NFL specimens had clumps of Tau, indicating the presence of CTE.

Scientists acknowledged that the evidence does not necessarily reflect all NFL or high school football players' brains. Those who donated their brains to the foundation believed that concussions they sustained affected their long-term health.

While changes in drills and tackling styles may help reduce brain injuries, football -- and all contact sports -- will remain dangerous, and students will have to consider the risks.

Gibson said, "With a kid who gets concussions, they have to realize, 'Although I love the sport, I can't play the sport.' Health comes first. If health is at risk, never look at the sport again."



HARVARD ADMISSIONS TRIAL EXPOSES CONTRADICTIONS

In the heat of college application season, the Harvard admissions trial has sparked intense conversation on the admissions process. In a lawsuit led by the president of Students for Fair Admissions Edward Blum, Harvard has been accused of discriminating against Asian applicants. The three-week trial began in Oct. 15 in Boston. The judge has said she may not rule until February.

Megan Lin

Blum has a history of litigation against affirmative action in higher education, having also recruited Abigail Fisher, the plaintiff in Fisher v. University of Texas. When the Supreme Court ruled in favor of UT Austin’s affirmative action policies, Blum moved on to Harvard’s “Asian problem.” He aims to end racial classifications in admissions.

The homepage of the SFA website asks, “Were You Denied Admission to College? It may be because you’re the wrong race.” Despite implying that race can be the deciding factor of admission, racial quotas at colleges are illegal. Of course, the question is whether Harvard considers race too heavily, possibly resulting in the rejection of a student in favor of another with a different color skin.

Studies suggest Asian-American applicants need to have higher test scores than other applicants to gain admission to top colleges. Harvard has even confessed that Asian applicants are admitted “at a significantly lower rate than white applicants” despite their “slightly stronger” SAT scores and grades. Still, it’s interesting that disillusioned whites and Asian-Americans lead this crusade against affirmative action, while white and Asian-American students are overrepresented at every Ivy League school. These institutions are also still majority white schools.

If SFA’s goal is to abolish racial classifications in order to prevent alleged bias, then it follows that colleges shouldn’t ask for personal essays, resumes or other material that admissions officers can review subjectively. If we really want to make college admissions “fair,” there are other areas that should draw scrutiny, too. In fact, “legacy” applicants and athletes have an advantage over applicants who don’t have history with Harvard, with an admission rate of 34 percent, compared to 6 percent for non-legacy applicants.

Why is it that star athletes or children of Harvard alumni -- two predominantly white demographics -- have such an upper hand that’s not based on academic merit? Blum’s silence on this fact raises deep questions about his motives.

Furthermore, Blum conveniently employs the model minority myth, lumping all Asian-Americans together as homogeneously successful when Asians are the most economically divided group in America. The model minority myth questions why African-Americans can’t overcome systemic racism through hard work by comparing them to Asians who appear to have succeeded despite Japanese-American internment and the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882.

Not only does this concept downplay how 200 years of slavery affect current African-American struggles, it also harms Asians who don’t fit into that narrative. Less-represented South and Southeast Asians, whose countries are underdeveloped and don’t provide the economic resources for good education, benefit from affirmative action. Nevertheless, Blum appeals to Asian-Americans dismayed at the idea of losing a spot in an Ivy League school to someone who didn’t score higher on standardized tests or achieve the same stellar grades.

The purpose of implementing race-conscious admissions programs was to acknowledge that systemic inequalities disproportionately impact African-Americans and Latinos. Even with affirmative action, blacks and Hispanics are still underrepresented at top colleges, with black students comprising 15 percent of college-age Americans but only 6 percent of freshmen at those schools, according to a New York Times analysis. Hispanics experience the same kind of gap due to population growth. Adopting race-blind policies doesn't stop discrimination; it overlooks the effects of historical prejudice. Alternatively, schools could implement socioeconomic-based affirmative action instead, which could more accurately identify underrepresented students without considering the color of their skin.

Harvard Medical School, the oldest medical school in the country, on the Harvard University campus in Cambridge, Mass. Harvard's undergraduate admissions practices are the subject of a lawsuit alleging discrimination against Asian applicants. **Photo from Wikimedia Commons**

In the end, if Harvard indeed abuses race as more than just an admissions "plus" factor, there's no doubt that it's a problem. However, Harvard's skewed admissions system should not be an instrument to advance Blum's agenda for dismantling all affirmative action policies. We have to acknowledge how racial identity plays into a student's socialization. In Harvard senior Sally Chen's words, "How can you talk about someone's potential or their achievements without giving a full context that talks about their identity and the struggles they have faced?"

In the same way that the model minority myth is used by people who believe minorities can overcome systematic racism through simple hard work and family values, proposing to eliminate race-conscious policies in higher education ignores that systematic oppression exists in the first place.

Kuehnle's High Jinks Backfire

By Thomas Vodrey

Soon after he was placed on administrative leave Nov. 1, Principal Jonathan Kuehnle found himself with a lot of time on his hands.

After trying and failing to take up knitting and archery, Kuehnle decided that his time would be best spent pranking his coworkers. His first effort? Sending a letter filled with glitter to the superintendent. But, with all Shaker's administrative changes, Kuehnle realized that he didn't actually know who the superintendent is, and his letter addressed to "Shaker Superintendent" was lost. A few days ago Kuehnle received a letter stamped "return to sender" in the mail, which he immediately opened.

He is still cleaning up the glitter.

QUIZ: Which of the following was not said at the Nov. 8 community meeting?

A) "Just like you, when I found out about this situation, I was also surprised."

B) "There was illness involved in the family among the individuals."

C) "Dr. Breeden will now take questions."

D) "Stay tuned."

E) "I am not sure which case the question is referring to."

F) "We cannot discuss personnel matters."

Answer: C

HEARD IN THE HALLS

"Wait, who is our current superintendent?"
Oct. 24, 1:49 p.m.

"That means that in 10 years I'll be a rabbi!" Oct. 23, 1:12 p.m.

"Did you find your cream cheese?"
Dec. 6, 4:17 p.m.

Word of the Year Winner: FIRE

Fire, n. combustion or burning

Fire, v. to terminate an employee

Fire, n. a foodie destination and employer of Shaker students

8-Second Movie Reviews

"Crimes of Grindelwald"
Grindelwald reminds
us of another politician...

"A Star Is Born"
We're sensing a theme of
unecessary re-makes

POSSIBLE CANDIDATES FOR SUPERINTENDANT (AS IN HIGH SCHOOL LITERATURE)

- **Winston Smith**
Has work experience in a similar district

- **Frankenstein's monster**
Is a non-traditional, or "hybrid candidate"

- **George Milton**
Inspires trust

- **Juliet Capulet**
Willing to listen, but is a decision-maker

- **Edward Rochester**
Has the ability to recruit exceptional personnel

- **Esteban Trueba**
Is comfortable leading innovation and reform efforts